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Antiquity,
EVIDENCE, and CERTAINTY
OF
CHRISTIANITY,
CANVASSED,
On Dr. Middleton's EXAMINATION
Of the Lord Bishop of London's
DISCOURSES
ON

The Use and Intent of Prophecy.

By **ANSELM BAYLY, LL. B.**
MINOR CANON of St. Paul's.

Res ipsa quæ nunc christiana religio nuncupatur, erat et apud *Antiquos*,
nec defuit ab *initio* generis humani, quousque ipse Christus venerit in
carne; unde vera religio, quæ jam erat, cæpit appellari Christiana.
Aug. oper. To. 1. p. 17. c. retr. L. 1. c. 13.

Stabat fides semper in Creatore & Christo ejus.

Tertull. adv. Marcion. L. 1. c. 21.

L O N D O N:

Printed, and sold by J. and J. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-
Yard*; Mr. CLEMENTS in *Oxford*; Mr. MATTHEWS in
Cambridge; and Mrs. PALMER in *Gloucester*. 1751.

(Price 1 s. 6 d.)

THE

Quarterly

EVIDENCE AND CERTAINTY

OF

CHRISTIANITY

CONTAINED

IN DR. MARTIN'S EXAMINATION

OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

DISCOVERED



BY THE REV. DR. MARTIN

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN A COURSE OF LECTURES

DELIVERED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN THE YEAR 1841

AND PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

OF OXFORD

INTRODUCTION.

THE Person, in whose Life-time the following Sheets were drawn up, and to whom they were intended in a particular Manner to have been addressed, is no more: A Person of shining Abilities, and lively Imagination, “peculiarly qualified to dress up any Subject into any Form, that would best serve his own Views;” than whom few, if any, have appeared greater Masters of their Pen: Which makes it very necessary for Readers to be “jealous of warping their Judgments by some Bias, which his Authority may be apt to imprint.” For his Abilities, tho’ great, were not such as placed him beyond the reach of Mistakes in Points of the greatest Importance to Mankind, and wherein Falsity and Misrepresentation may be attended with the worst of Consequences; if they proceed from Design, to him that propagates them, if from Oversight, to many Readers, who are liable to have their Judgments warped by them. To point out these Misrepresentations—confirm the opposite Truth and hereby prevent those, who are liable to it, from being misled, is the Design and Attempt of the following Papers. The Performance under Considera-

fideration is—the Examination of the Lord
 Bishop of *London's Discourses on the Use and
 Intent of Prophecy*. This Piece has indeed met
 with Opponents already, which renders it ne-
 cessary to premise something by way of obviat-
 ing a Conclusion which may be made, namely,
 that when any single Book receives many An-
 swers, every successive one is a tacit Reflection
 of Weakness and Insufficiency on the former,
 or at least that if it had been confuted, that
 would have made other Answers unnecessary.
 As if it was just to make the same Conclusion
 in literary as in other Contentions, where an
 Individual is not conquered but by many Op-
 ponents, or if he can be conquered by one,
 many are useless. But 'tis not so: For should
 an Advancer of Errors receive a Confutation
 from the first Answer, yet others may have
 their Use; since all Men cannot see Things,
 especially those of a moral and spiritual Nature,
 clearly in the same Situation. This makes it
 even necessary sometimes to place them in new
 Lights, not because they were not clear to many
 in the first Point of View; but because they
 may be more discernable to weak Eyes when
 shaded or brought near, than when placed in the
 Glare and at a Distance. Neither do I design
 that what is here offered should lessen the Public's
 Esteem of others Labours, and involve any such
 Imputation as, that in the present Controversy
 the Opinions opposed have hitherto remained
 unconfuted, This Answer I will venture to say
 is

is new as to its Design, its Proofs, and Observations ; whether it is more complete than any that has preceded it, I will not pretend to say. Other Answers may be thought sufficient, and afford more Entertainment to the Curious ; but my Design is to offer something for the Instruction of the common Reader, and to supply him with Arguments in Defence of his Religion, by setting before him a plain View of Matters of Fact just as they stand in the Bible. This I am ready to imagine can always better be done in Discourses, than in any other Method of writing. For as here every thing is ranged under proper Heads and Divisions, much Acuteness is not required to understand, nor much Labour to remember what is observed. This Consideration induced me to draw up the three following Discourses, which were delivered at St. Paul's in the Months of *June* and *July* 1750, and are now humbly offered to the candid Consideration of the Public.

As to the Discourses themselves, their Subjects, and Manner in which those Subjects are treated, so as to form an Answer to the exceptionable Parts of the *Examination*, the Reader will be pleased to take this general Account.

The Discourses, though their Subjects are different, are so calculated, as that in some sort a Dependence and Connection is observable between them. I have herein one continued

tinued but very extensive View, which is to point out the Evidence, Certainty, Unity,--- and therefore I would add, the Antiquity of the Christian Religion. I have endeavoured by new Proofs to support what truly good and learned Men have in all Ages maintained, --- that the Knowledge of the true God ---- the first Promise of Life, and the first Link of the Chain of Prophecy commenced with *Adam*; and was all along continued, embraced and understood even to the *Æra* of the Gospel, and that, by a Conjunction of Proofs and Testimonies, Jesus is the Christ, or the true Messiah promised in the Old Testament. As I go along, I endeavour to obviate under certain Heads those Glances and some plain Speeches, that lie scattered here and there in the *Examination* against important and received Points, in our holy Religion.

Thus for the Subject of the first Discourse, I have made choice of a Text from the Prophet *Isaiah*, which in a most expressive Manner asserts, that the Revelation made from God to the Fathers was sufficiently clear and distinct. Herein I enter into a View and Defence of the Old Testament. I begin at *Genesis*, consider Man in his State of Innocence, but particularly in his Fall and Recovery, in order to take off the Edge of those Objections in the *Examination* to its being a Narration of Facts. I go on to shew the Origin and Design of Sacrifice---produce strong and conclusive Arguments

ments---that it was of divine Institution--- commenced at the Fall, and was understood at that Time to be a Prefiguration of Christ ; in Opposition to certain Positions and Insinuations in the *Examination*.* The Consideration of this last Point is farther and more professedly pursued in the second Discourse ; the immediate Design of which is to prove from plain and express References in the New Testament, that the Messiah was prophesied of from *Adam* to *Moses*, and that Faith in a Redeemer was ever the true and saving Religion, in Contradistinction to what is said --- “ that
 “ Jesus and his Apostles never refer us, for the
 “ Evidence of our Faith to Prophecies deduced
 “ from *Adam*, *Enth*, or *Noah*--- never ap-
 “ pealed to any other Prophecies, as applica-
 “ ble to Christ, but what were found in the
 “ Law and the latter Prophets---never looked
 “ for them any higher than to the Law and
 “ the Prophets, nor ever appealed to any
 “ other, than what they found there (or as it
 “ is very loosely and slightly worded, pages
 “ 19 and 97) which they *thought* or *imagined*
 “ to relate to Jesus---that a Chain of antedi-
 “ luvian Prophecies is nothing else but a fan-
 “ ciful Conceit, which has no Connection at
 “ all with, and is of no Service and Advan-
 “ tage to Christianity---a vain and impertinent
 “ Fancy, which has no sort of Relation to
 b “ the

" the Evidence of the Gospel."* Bold Affertions these ! void of Truth, solid Argument and good Sense. Nor less unfound is the Inference--- " That Jesus and his Apostles constantly applied the Prophecies of the Old Testament singly and *independently* on each other, as so many distinct Arguments for the Truth of his Mission; and that the Authority of the Gospel, as far as it is grounded on Prophecy, rests on those single and *independent* Predictions, which are delivered here and there in the Law and the Prophets."† An Inquiry into this Point is the Business of the third Discourse; in which it is proved, that the several Prophecies must from the Nature of Evidence be considered together, in order to make Prophecy a Witness, that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; it is also shewn, that the Proof of this Truth cannot properly be rested on any single Part, but on the whole, of the Evidence. Thus these three Discourses contain a summary View of Revelation: The whole is shewn to be one, uniform, consistent Plan; because the same Doctrines and Precepts are inculcated in both Testaments, (as will be evident to any one who will take the Pains to compare them by the help of a Concordance) which agree and mutually explain each other; and consequently it is very certain, that the New Testament cannot with any Propriety be considered as a new

* Exam. 18, 19. Title and p. 23, 97, 98. † Exa. 16, 150, 151.

new Revelation : Wherefore it is not true—
 “ That Jesus came to publish a new Law of
 “ Righteousness, more perfect than that of
 “ *Moses*, a new Religion, wholly strange
 “ and inconceivable, &c.”* which is by direct,
 immediate and necessary Consequence
 maintaining, that the two Testaments disagree
 and are at Variance ; and if this was the
 Case, another Consequence would inevitably
 follow too obvious to mention. I will now
 endeavour to strengthen and confirm what is
 offered in the Discourses against the *Examination*
 by some additional Observations.

In the Discourses no Regard is had to the
 Method, in which the *Examination* is drawn
 up, but its Mistakes are taken Notice of and
 obviated under those Heads, where they would
 most naturally fall. Indeed to attempt to answer
 it Page by Page and pursue it Step by Step
 thro’ all its artful Windings, would be an endless
 Task, if not the ready Way to lose one’s Self.
 The quickest and surest Method, tho’ that affords
 no small Trouble, is to collect it’s *Mem-
 bra disjecta*, put them together and expose
 them to View, and then they will startle those
 who before were its greatest Admirers. Not
 that all its Parts are scattered and ill shapen ;
 this I would by no Means be thought to suggest :
 There are some Observations in it, that
 naturally and regularly arise, adorned with
 such Language as every true Judge must admire,

mire, and so just that every sincere Advocate of the Gospel ought freely to allow them and join Issue upon. Such as trying religious Opinions, by recurring directly to the Scriptures :* The Account of the Use and Application of Prophecy by Jesus and the Apostles, in Proof of the Truth of the Gospel drawn out from Page 9 to 21, and from 93 to 97 ; excepting the Inferences, which we shall see presently are deduced without Foundation. Whether the Interpretation of St. *Peter* comes nearer to the Truth, than that given by his Lordship, as that Passage is so much controverted, I pretend not to determine : But that Proposition † “ Whatever creates Faith must “ first convince the Understanding,” appears to be liable to no Exception ; *si sic omnia !* But in other Parts, the *Examination* is greatly exceptionable, and furnishes Matter of Offence to not only the Patrons of our holy Religion, but of Politeness and Civility. The many unbecoming Freedoms used towards the eminent Author of the Discourses can be defensible upon no Scheme whatever. Persons in high Stations, Ecclesiastical or Civil, have ever claimed peculiar Respect ; insomuch that their very Faults and Mistakes, from which who is free, should be animadverted upon with Tenderness, Candor and good Manners. For when once the *Powers*, their Persons or Actions, are made the Subject of Ridicule and

Con-

* P 2. † P. 92.

Contempt, all Influence, Authority and Subjection will go nigh to cease, and, was the Contempt to become general, even the very Being of that kind of Society, which subsists by Order and Rule. Traduction, especially of great Names, is a deadly Evil, it is a catching and spreading Mischief! Of this from the Example before us, we have had shameful Instances. For no sooner came out the *Examination*, than others far indeed behind in Strength and Ingenuity, though equal in Rudeness, ventured *anonymously* to draw their Pens against a Prelate, who has given eminent Proofs of his great Abilities, and his being sincerely attached to Christianity, its Doctrines and Precepts. But to proceed, —

'Tis asserted in the *Examination* * “ that
 “ the Author of *the Grounds and Reasons*,
 “ had a crafty View in extolling the Credit of
 “ Prophecy in order to depress it afterwards
 “ the more effectually.” What View the
 Author of the *Examination* had in extolling it
 I wont presume to say, but this is certain,
 that the Foundation he is for placing it upon,
 appears to be exceedingly improper and un-
 warrantable, if not unsafe; and the Conces-
 sion he makes, † “ That the Author against
 “ whom the Bishop’s Discourses were level-
 “ led, has alledged several strong and even
 “ *unanswerable* Objections to some of the Pro-
 “ phecies, which are cited by the Evange-
 “ lists,”

* P. 29.

† P. 151.

“ lifts,” seems to carry in it a tacit Resignation of the Cause of Christianity to the Adversary. Pages 148, 149, 197, 198, seem even professedly and openly to plead the Cause of Deism. But enough on unproved Assertions and Insinuations, let us proceed to examine the Force of his Arguments.

At Page 150, he reduces the whole of his Observations into two Propositions :

1st, “ That, in preaching the Gospel to
“ the *Jews*, Jesus and the Apostles constant-
“ ly applied the Prophecies of the Old Testa-
“ ment, singly and independently on each other,
“ to all the remarkable Circumstances of the
“ Life of Jesus, as so many decisive Proofs of
“ his divine Mission.”

2^{dly}, “ That, in their Search and Allega-
“ tion of those Prophecies, they began al-
“ ways with *Moses*, as the first Prophet, who
“ had spoken of Christ, in the Delivery of his
“ Law to the People.”

Let us see now what are the Proofs and Arguments, on which these two Propositions stand. He begins to lay his Foundation at Page 9, and at 97, erects this Superstructure. At Page 16, he infers the first Proposition from the Practice of Jesus, and goes on to Page 21, to support it by that of the Apostles. To which I answer. It is true, that Jesus and his Apostles apply the several Prophecies to
this

this or that Occasion, as it occurred, in Proof of the Truth of the Gospel; and it is difficult to conceive how they could apply them otherwise. Jesus could not apply to himself any particular Prediction, till the correspondent Event gave him an Opportunity: We cannot apply them otherwise to this Day than one by one. But how can it thence be inferred, that there is no Chain of Prophecies, and that the Intention of Jesus and his Apostles was to apply them *independently* on each other? Surely it is impossible they should be independent and without Connection, since they relate *all* to the same Person: Nay, the Instances themselves seem plainly to import the very contrary to what they are produced for, particularly where Jesus refers to the Scriptures in general, and says, *they are they which testify of me.* To put a Case: Suppose a Model drawn of some future Building, and that it be referred to in general, or that a particular Description be given of it, by Word or in Writing, wherein the Building completed is compared with the Model. If the last, it can no otherwise be done than Part by Part, but surely it would be the height of Folly and Madness thence to infer, that the several Parts are independent on each other: For that would make it cease to be a Model. Neither Jesus nor the Apostles indeed ever mention the Word *Chain*; yet as this Word is peculiarly applied in the *English* Idiom to express the whole Process

or

or Series of any thing, his Lordship has very properly made use of it to comprehend a Number of antient Prophecies given in different Ages, and which unite in the Description of the same Person and Character. Upon the Term *Chain* seems to turn all the Quibble and Dispute, but though the sacred Writers use not the Name, yet they evidently express the Thing.

It is asserted,* “ That any single Prophecy literally fulfilled is a strong Proof of the Authority of the Gospel, though we had Reason even to neglect the rest, as uncertain and precarious.” We must be cautious how we admit, that any one of the Prophecies applied by the Apostles are uncertain and precarious, for fear of Consequences that must be obvious to every one: *Divide et impera*. However as the Christian Religion is a very harmless, inoffensive Religion, if cordially embraced, and Men would do well, be Friends to themselves and Society, would they be prevailed upon to commence Christians indeed by any Argument; so I have therefore no Desire to dissuade any one from being induced to embrace Christianity upon the Evidence of any single Prophecy literally fulfilled: But let such a one think this with himself at the same Time, that, if one Prophecy literally fulfilled is a strong Proof of the Authority of the Gospel, many

many Prophecies literally fulfilled must be stronger Proofs of its Authority.

The second Proposition is still with less Shew of Reason inferred from the Instances produced. For the first Instance where Jesus tells the *Jews* — *Moses wrote of me*, may very naturally imply, that he spake of him in all his Writings, in *Genesis* before the Flood, as well as after, and in his other Four Books.

The second Instance also, *beginning at Moses*, &c. is a mere Quibble upon the Word *Moses*. Beginning at *Moses*, is beginning at the *Writings* of *Moses*, not at the *Time* in which he wrote them, as the Examiner would here artfully insinuate. And if beginning at *Moses*, is beginning at his *Writings*, it is most natural to suppose, that our Lord began at that Part of them, where the first Mention is made of himself; suppose at the third Chapter of *Genesis*: For to the Words---*beginning at Moses*, &c. the Evangelist immediately subjoins---*he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the Things concerning himself*. All that expressly related to him he expounded to them, beginning at *Moses*, who records the earliest Prophecy that was given of him, and thence proceeded regularly through the rest of the inspired Writers who came after, to the *last* that spake of him, and to the *last Prediction* that Prophet delivered.

The Author says,* “ He had not disco-
c “ vered

“ vered the least trace in any of the four
 Gospels” (why must the *Acts* and the *Epi-
 stles* be excluded?) “ of any Appeal to antedi-
 luvian Predictions: Where, though No-
 body perhaps will call in Question the
 Sharpness of his Eye-sight, yet one would
 be apt to suspect that he never chose to see
 more of any Subject, than what might
 serve that particular *Hypothesis* which he
 came prepared to support.” This appears
 also from an Instance in Page 23, where he
 says, “ To consider Prophecy in so extensive
 a View, he cannot see the least Advantage
 it is to the Service of Christianity, and that
 the Extension of it into the antediluvian
 Ages can serve no other End, but to enve-
 lop a plain Question in Clouds and Myste-
 ry.” But surely that Man, who doth not
 see the Service it does, and the Support it brings
 to Christianity, to maintain, that Prophecy
 began with *Adam*, must be exceedingly blind.
 For let me ask, if the first Link of the Chain of
 Prophecy commenc’d not with *Adam*, how is
 Christianity uniform and consistent? If it be-
 gan with *Moses*, and Mankind were from that
 Period only taught to expect Salvation by a
 Redeemer, by what Method were the pre-
 ceding Race to be saved? Let these Queries
 be considered well by those who can’t or ra-
 ther chuse not to see. I will conclude this
 Head with laying before the Reader a few
 Pas-

Passages out of the *Examination*, and leaving with him some Queries on them.

Quotation the first, p. 10.

“ Christ exhorts the *Jews* to search the
“ Scriptures for the Proofs of his Character
“ and Mission.”

Query.

Did he then not bid them search from *Genesis* to the last of the Prophets?

Quotation the second, p. 11 and 15.

“ This (appealing to Predictions) we may
“ imagine was the Subject of all his (Jesus)
“ Discourses, though the Evangelists have
“ recorded but few of those particular Pro-
“ phecies, which were alledged by him as
“ prefigurative of his Character and Mission.
“ *All this was done, says our Lord, that the*
“ *Scriptures of the Prophets might be fulfilled,*
“ plainly signifying, says the Doctor, that
“ there was not any Circumstance of his Life,
“ which had not been foretold in such a Man-
“ ner, that the Accomplishment of it by its
“ Conformity with the Prediction, might an-
“ swer the Purpose intended by God of de-
“ monstrating the Divinity of his Character.”

Query.

Is not this allowing that there are still re-
maining in the Old Testament, many Pro-
phecies not pointed out by Jesus and his Apo-
stles? May we not then search the Scriptures

ourselves for Evidence, and compare the Life of Jesus written in the New Testament, and see how every Circumstance foretold is in his Life fulfilled, and must not therefore the several Prophecies be dependent on each other?

Quotation third, p. 19.

“ The Apostles collected from the Old Testament *all* the several Prophecies.”

Query.

Is this certain? Are there then no Prophecies remaining in the Old Testament unapplied by the sacred Writers? How does this square with the second Quotation?

We are now come to Page 98, which, to 139, together with the Animadversions on the Bishop's Appendix, presents us with a Mixture very uncommon and extraordinary. The Author no longer treats Things with any Ceremony, but makes a bold Trial of the “ public Patience and blind Deference to the “ Authority of a great Name,” *and seems to have wrought himself up into an Opinion,* “ that “ the Public was disposed to think, *that what- “ ever he should say,* was right, and that his “ *Affertions* would go down with them, without giving him the Trouble” of offering any Reasons for them.

Pages 104, 105, 106, contains such shameful and senseless Sneers on the Paradisiacal State, as deserve no Notice; neither do I think it worth

worth while to concern myself, with what is observed from Page 107 to 111, upon the Hea-then Oracles; since, should these stand or fall, the *Divine* cannot at all be hereby affected.

At Page 99 the Reader is led to believe, that the Author would confine his Remarks to the History of the Fall; but, in Page 102, he extends his View as far back as to Man in his State of Innocence; and in five Pages * to the "*Origin and Nature of these Wordly Things,*" says, that "the fundamental Points of all Religion, and of necessary Belief, *viz.* that "this World and all Things in it derived their "Existence from a Creator, &c. are clearly "inculcated by the Story" before us: (Under this Term, it is very evident, from the above Accounts, he comprehends all the Events represented in the four first Chapters of *Genesis*;) which he asserts, "cannot be considered "in any other Character, than as one of those "instructive or moral Fictions, to which we "may give the Name of Apologue, or Fable, "or Allegory, or of any Thing rather than "of an historical Narration, with which it is "utterly incompatible." The Author is dead, and we will therefore spare his Ashes: But no Period, which concluded with Points of such Importance, surely ever ended so indeterminately, so indifferently, so--- but I forbear! But how is this Conclusion supported? Let us trace his Account of Things regularly
to

* 128, 131, 132, 133, 136.

to the Fall, and examine the Weight of his Objections to their being Matters of Fact. At Page 128, he is for reviewing the *Story* as if it had been told to us by *Sanconiatbo*; “ In “ which Way of considering it, says he, the “ first Reflection, which would occur, is, that “ it was not possible for any Mortal, to give “ an historical (Meaning no doubt a true) “ Narration of the Events therein represented; “ or to describe the particular Manner, Order and Time in which this World, and its “ principal Inhabitant, Man, were formed.” By-the-by, this is reasoning on a Case which never happened any way parallel to that before us, and therefore it is ridiculous. The Supposition that the *Story* had been told by *Sanco Panca*, would have been as much to the Purpose, as the supposing that it was by *Sanconiatbo*. But however, doubtless it is impossible for unassisted Reason to go beyond Fancy and Invention in these Points. Upon this Foot, the Acknowledgment of the Necessity of divine Revelation to inform us truly of the Creation, Formation and Nature of Things, we join Issue; but then, as is granted,* if *Moses* was commissioned and instructed by God to write it, why may it not be a true History of Matters of Fact? It must be either true or false? If the former, it is worthy of God; if the latter, it is utterly incompatible with his Veracity. For it is impossible for God to lie; and

* P. 135,

and cannot Man as easily comprehend Truth as Fancy, Invention and Lies? Cannot he understand the *Realities* of Things as easily as the *Appearances*? It can then by no Means be allowed that, “ *Moses’s* Commission was ever “ accommodated to the prevailing Taste and “ Customs of the Nations around him.” For then he must have indulged the *Israelites* in Idolatry, &c. *Moses* no where writes *ad captum Vulgi*, in the false and adopted Sense of the Words, though he does in the true and proper Sense: He always speaks of material Things really as they are in Nature, and conveys the Knowledge of spiritual Things thro’ their Medium; but of this presently.

The Relation of the Origin of Things appears to be absolutely literal; it raises in us Ideas as proper and immediate as any we have from any Objects of our Senses. The Words ---Darkness, Light, Expansion or Firmament; Waters, Earth and their Products; Sun, Moon and Stars, placed in the great Expanse to give Light by Day and Night upon the Earth, can in this Place be intended to convey no secondary Ideas, and we shall presently catch him allowing as much. The Account of these Things, which are all the Objects of our Senses, is agreeable to Observation and the strictest Experiment: And, had the sacred Account of them throughout the Scriptures been attended to, Men could never have advanced such ridiculous and absurd Notions
con-

concerning their Origin, Nature and Uses, as are to be found in Books of Philosophy. As to the Notion that Paradise and its Appendages were Non-entities, in other Words, Apologue, Fable or Allegory, enough is urged for the Confutation of it in the first Discourse. Though by-the-by, as Man, after he was formed, must stand in need of some Place for a Habitation, &c. let me ask, why might not he be situated literally where *Moses* says he was, in an *Inclosure* planted by the special and paternal Care of his Creator? To what is observed in the first Discourse on the Fall, we proceed now to add a few Reflections.

It is asserted in the *Examination*,* “ If the
 “ Terms History, Parable, Similitude and
 “ Metaphor, be taken strictly, it will be difficult (here he softens, for just now it was
 “ impossible) to discover any one of them in
 “ it.” How is this proved? Truly not at all. For in the next Paragraph, it is averred,
 “ That every thing is as plain and literal, as
 “ any Language can make it:” And below,
 “ that it is a plain Description of Facts; yet
 “ that it cannot be History for all that.” What crossing, puzzling and Confusion is here! Again, he says, “ all the Facts are *apparently*
 “ fictitious and impossible.” Their Possibility is proved in the first Discourse. He goes on, “ We cannot properly call it Parable;
 “ for though a Parable be a mere Fiction, it
 “ is

“ is defined to be of such a Sort, as must always be probable, or what might possibly be true.” He does not offer so much as the Shadow of an Argument, why it may not be metaphorical, but concludes with the same kind of Indifference as observed above, *naſo ſuſpēdit adunco*, that “ we may give it the general Name of Allegory ;” in Opposition to which we may affirm, that if it cannot be a Parable, much less can it be an Allegory: This he was aware of, and therefore, says, “ or we may call it rather an Apologue or moral Fable ;” or any thing, but the Truth. The Reflection is justly due here, “ no Parable surely, in which a Point of such high Importance is treated, was ever more conspicuously trifling than this.”

But the greatest Curiosity yet to come, is the Moral; part of which is no other than the Letter itself, and part of it has not half so much Sense in it as one of honest *Æſop's*, nor even fit to be turned into *nonsense Verses*; not near so apt and coherent, and so trifling, as that it must of Course “ provoke every Reader of common Sense to treat it with all that Contempt, which it justly deserves, without the help of a Monitor to point out the Ridicule of it ;” however, lest any of its Beauties should escape the Eye of the cursory Reader, I will endeavour to bring a few of them to his Notice.

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We have already seen that he has jumbled together the four first Chapters of *Genesis*, and even reduced them to *Tobu* and *Bobu*; at Page 136, 137, he intitles it an *Eastern Fable*, and says, "no other Lesson or Doctrine can be inferred from it, than what he had already intimated, that this World was created by God; and that Man was happy in it as long as he continued innocent, but forfeited his Happiness and became miserable, as soon as he became a wilful Sinner." Is this the Moral of a Fable? This is no other than a summary Account of the Letter itself. These Truths are the Primary and obvious Meaning of the History, and we want no Secondary; nay, no other was ever contended for. A mighty good and useful Moral this, or rather History.

But by what Means was Man tempted to become miserable? Of this we have altogether a new and curious Solution, in Page 133, "Man was plunged into Misery, Sorrow and Death by the tempting Suggestions of Lust and sensual Appetite, of which the Serpent was the Emblem;" I suppose among the Pre-adamites; for no Authority is produced, that it was so among others, either from sacred or profane Writ, and it is by no Means so self-evident a Truth as to need no *Eclaircissement*. A Sparrow or some such salacious Animal would have been a mighty good Emblem in his Fable, and methinks it is Pity so fine a Moral should be

be set aside for want of a proper Emblem to make it coherent; yet after all, he seems to supersede this Moral by a Second, which he draws out of his Fable in the next Page, where he makes it account for the abject State of the Serpentine Race.

But we have yet a more important Question to be solved by our Moralist. How is Man recovered from his lapsed State, from Misery, Sorrow and Death? For the Solution of this Difficulty we must have recourse to Page 132, where we are told, "Man has not any other
 " *Means* of recovering the divine Favour, or
 " restoring himself to his original Happiness,
 " but by deserting that bestial Rule of sensual Pleasure, which had beguiled him into
 " a State of Guilt and Misery." On this last Paragraph, my Christian Readers, I leave you to make your own Reflections!

Thus then stands our Eastern Fable and its Moral, all of a Piece, and perfectly consistent! Query now, by Way of Return to a smart Assertion in Page 113, if the Interpretations and Whims put upon this History by this late Christian Divine, be not abundantly more absurd and senseless than those of all former *Jews* or Christians? We will proceed to make one or two Remarks more, and then deliver the Fable and its Moral to the Winds to sport with, or to be carried

— *In vicum vendentem thus & odores,
 Et piper, & quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis.*

In Pages 161 and 114, it is asserted, " The
 " Text suggests to us no other Notion, than
 " that of a real Serpent ; the Curse also de-
 " nounced against the Deceiver restrains it to
 " a mere Serpent : " And through five Pages,
 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, he ridicules the
 Supposition of any Alteration being introduced
 into the Nature and Shape of the Serpent ; yet
 his reasoning in Pages 115, 134, 135, seems
 to favour this Notion ; and particularly in
 Page 169, he insinuates his own Opinion un-
 der that of others, " that if the Curse was
 " denounced against a mere Serpent, *of creep-*
 " *ing upon his Belly, licking the Dust, and be-*
 " *ing hostile and odious to Man,* it would seem
 " impertinent, since it inflicted nothing, but
 " what flowed from the original Nature and
 " Formation of the Animal." How do these
 Accounts tally? If they are not inconsistent
 and contradictory, they are at least very per-
 plexed and confused. Indeed through this
 whole Affair the Author seems to have no-
 thing else in View, but to puzzle *Moses's* Ac-
 count of Things, and thereby to bring an O-
 dium upon him and his Writings ; or how-
 ever, the Reader must be puzzled, I own I
 have been often, insomuch, that every Time
 I have read it, I seemed to be passing over
 dreary and barren Heaths, amidst Mists and
 thick Clouds ! But which of the above Ac-
 counts are we to adhere to? Are we to restrain
 the Curse to a mere Serpent, or not? Suppose
 we

we agree that no Alteration has been introduced into the Nature and Shape of the Serpent. Why then it seems that a Curse being denounced must suppose some Alteration, otherwise, it would be impertinent, if it inflicted no Punishment; yet we agree that no Alteration has passed upon the Serpent, consequently no Punishment has been inflicted upon it, nor any Curse; which therefore cannot be restrained to a mere Serpent. But now let us proceed one Step further, and suppose, that the Deceiver was a spiritual Being, who has undergone some Punishment and Alteration in consequence of the Curse, and that he and his Punishment be represented to us by pointing, as it were, to a Creature, which is the Object of our Senses, and of all others the most groveling, noxious and odious; where then will be any Difficulty and Impropriety? I must beg the Reader to suspend his Objections, if he has any, till he has heard me out.

The Author of the *Examination* seems in this Inquiry, as well as in that of Prophecy, to quibble upon Words and Names; contends that it cannot be History, Parable, Similitude, Metaphor, nay he will scarce allow it to be any Thing: But now suppose we avoid calling it by any of those Terms; and make Inquiry only into the Things and Sense. I shall introduce and confirm what I have farther to offer with some Observations and Extracts from able and ingenious Writers concerning
the

the Methods, by which we acquire all our Knowledge.

The Doctrine of innate Ideas is, with great Ingenuity and Strength of Argument, set aside by Mr. *Lock*, and the Origin of all our Ideas proved to be from Sensation: This Subject is also very far pursued and newly applied by the Author of the *Procedure and Limits of the human Understanding*, which Book contains a Number of curious and improving Observations on the Necessity and Use of Analogy in Theology, without the Help of which, he demonstrates, we cannot possibly come at the Knowledge of spiritual Beings, their Actions and Manner of Existence. The Sum of his Arguments, by which he establishes this Doctrine, I will endeavour to draw out with as much Connection as I can.

“ The Bounds set to our Understanding by
 “ Nature, are not very extensive; for the Mind
 “ hath originally no larger a Sphere of its Ac-
 “ tivity than this visible Frame of material
 “ Objects. All Things beyond this, with re-
 “ spect to any immediate Perception of our
 “ Faculties, are as if they had no Being: * By
 “ Nature we can know nothing beyond our-
 “ selves and the Things about us; these are
 “ the Bounds and Measure of our Knowledge;
 “ the Limits and utmost Extent of human
 “ Understanding; † here the Mind stops;
 “ and it must begin a-new for the Apprehen-
 “ sion

* Book I. P. 52.

† Introd. P. 7.

“ fion of Things supernatural and intirely im-
 “ material ; or all Intercourse with Heaven
 “ must be cut off. The Mind can hold In-
 “ tercourse with Heaven by Means of Analo-
 “ gy only ;” || which is defined at the Begin-
 ning of the Introduction to this Effect, “ Our
 “ Ideas or Conceptions of Things are proper
 “ and immediate, or mediate and improper :
 “ Of the first Kind are our Ideas of the Things
 “ of this World, which are the proper and
 “ immediate Objects of our Senses and Rea-
 “ son : Of the second Kind are such as we
 “ form of spiritual Things, of God, his At-
 “ tributes, or of any Thing else in another
 “ World ; of which we have no immediate,
 “ proper Idea at all, and consequently, that
 “ we are under a Necessity of conceiving all
 “ Things supernatural by Analogy, *i. e.* by the
 “ Mediation and Substitution of those Ideas,
 “ which we have of ourselves and of all other
 “ Things of Nature ; between the Truths of
 “ which, and those of Religion, there is a
 “ mutual Sympathy and fast Connection, they
 “ fall in together, and communicate Light to
 “ each other : By the Medium of natural
 “ Things, our Understanding is enlarged vast-
 “ ly beyond its native Sphere ; a new and im-
 “ mense Scene of Things is hereby opened to
 “ the Mind, and a solid Foundation laid for
 “ a rational, well-grounded Assent and Faith
 “ to such Truths as are otherwise impercepti-
 “ ble

“ ble, and of which we can have no more
 “ Notion than a blind Man can of Colours.*
 “ By Analogy, the great and glorious Variety
 “ of heavenly Things, the World of Spirits,
 “ and even God himself and his Attributes,
 “ together with all the sacred Mysteries of
 “ Christianity, become the Objects of our
 “ Reason, and Understanding, and Faith;
 “ and Things otherwise imperceptible grow
 “ familiar and easy.”† In Page 34 of the In-
 troduction, where he obviates Objections to
 the Use of Analogy, he urges in Vindication
 of it to this Effect, “ The several Propositions
 “ of those Ideas of Sensation, which are the
 “ first Rudiments of our Knowledge, and the
 “ only Materials the Mind of Man hath to
 “ work upon, render divine Analogy of uni-
 “ versal Advantage in Religion; which ena-
 “ bles us to state the true Manner of appre-
 “ hending the Mysteries of Christianity; and
 “ to judge, when it is that our Reasonings up-
 “ on them are just, and solid, and clear; and
 “ when they are confused, precarious and
 “ false.” He also proves, Page 34 and else-
 where, that the Reality and Truth of the Doc-
 trines of the Gospel, God, his Attributes, &c.
 are perfectly preserved, tho’ they are analogi-
 cally conceived, and not, as some are apt to
 imagine, resolved into mere Figure and Allu-
 sion and reduced to nothing. “ To convince
 “ (says he) those, who draw such Conclusions
 “ and

* Book I. P. 57, 58. and Introd. P. 7. † Book I. P. 8.

“ and reject the Use of Analogy, that they are
 “ fundamentally wrong and advance Positions
 “ destructive of all Religion, natural as well
 “ as revealed, let them single out any one
 “ Idea or Conception together with the Word,
 “ by which we express it, and revolve it in
 “ their Mind, and try whether they can trans-
 “ fer it to the divine Being, and the Things
 “ of another World in the same strict and
 “ literal Propriety, with which they apply it
 “ to Men and the Things of this World.”

Thus evident and plain is the Nature, Ne-
 cessity and Use of Analogy in Theology ; which
 takes its Rise from the Objects of Sense, and
 carries us to those, which are far removed from
 it, by the Substitution of the Idea or Concep-
 tion of one Thing with the Term belonging to
 it, to stand for another Thing on account of
 some apparent or real Similitude, Resemblance
 and Correspondency between the Things com-
 pared, or rather, the Notions thereby conceived.
 Hence the Practice of applying the same Word
 to different Objects on Account of some Re-
 semblance ; of substituting material Images,
 Persons or Actions for spiritual Things, Per-
 sons or Actions ; and calling the Sign and the
 Thing signified by the same Name, observa-
 ble continually in the Scriptures, appears won-
 derfully proper ; and carries in it incontestibly
 the highest Marks of divine Wisdom. Hence
 too we may venture to assert, that divine Re-
 velation itself could no otherwise give us Con-
 e cep-

ceptions of spiritual Things, but by their Affinity and Resemblance to such Ideas, as we are acquainted with, and can receive by Sensation.* When God therefore planted a Garden, and placed Man in it, affixed to certain Trees situated in the Center, high Names and lofty Titles, what could be the Design herein, the Reader now can be at no Loss to infer. Again, when a certain Creature is represented, as talking and reasoning, though by Nature mute; as tempting and drawing off the Woman from her Allegiance to her Maker, though by no Means the most subtle of the Beasts of the Field, and a dreadful Curse is denounced against him for his Crime, can the Reader now possibly hesitate at the Meaning? Could there be in all Nature a more apt and proper Creature, venomous, groveling and odious, by which to describe an *invisible Being* become *Evil*, his *Nature* and *Punishment*? And if this Creature was made to be present, and was really actuated by the wicked Spirit, which is certainly very possible, as is proved in the first Discourse, then the Curse, denounced against the spiritual Serpent in Terms borrowed from the natural, appears very striking; and we are hereby enabled to conceive him reduced to a State the lowest, the most wretched and depraved: Many weighty Reasons might be offered in Support of this Opinion;

* See Sermon 11. Vol. 2. of Dr. Rogers on the Difficulty of St. Paul's Choice, P. 309.

nion ; but as the Scriptures appear not to be explicit in this Point, I beg to leave every one with Modesty and Humility to enjoy his own private Opinion ; yet there are important and necessary Points, in which the Scriptures teach us all to agree — that the Devil bears the Name of the Serpent — that he beguiled *Eve*, and that the Seed which conquers him is Christ, as is observed hereafter. Now should any one be ready to object that the above Method of Interpretation by making one Sentence of the same Discourse carry but one Meaning and another two, the spiritual as well as the literal, destroys the Matters of Fact ; in order to remove this Objection, I must beg to refer the Proposer of it to the first Volume of *Revelation examined with Candor* ;* where he will find some proper and judicious Remarks on this very Objection, started in a Letter to Dr. *Waterland*. When the Subject leads to immaterial and mental Things, it will be impossible to have correct Conceptions of them without a careful Attention to the Material, with which they are clothed, and which serve, as a Body, to convey them to the Senses, and thereby to bring Conviction to the Understanding ; in which Case, this Author proves, that figurative Interpretations are perfectly consistent with the strictest Truths of Fact.

I have one Remark more to make on the *Examination*, and then I will take my Leave
of

of this wild Performance; it is on what is said, Page 136, on the Cherubim.

Now that the Cherubim was Analogical, we may agree; but not that it is Allegorical, in his Sense of the Word Allegory. For, without inquiring into what it was an Exhibition of, to prove, that it was some real Exhibition, we may remember, that it was set up in the Tabernacle, and in the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of the Temple, and was carved upon the Walls, &c. This also may serve to convince us, that Paradise and all its Appendages were once Realities, subsisting in Nature.

Thus *Jehovah*, the all-gracious, merciful and wise Author of Nature, made Man, and provided for him Means, whereby he might be wise and happy in his upright and lapsed State; he made all Nature to administer to his spiritual as well as temporal Wants; hath given him a Revelation abounding with exceeding and precious Promises to fill him with Hope, Joy and Consolation: And for his more effectual Instruction and Conversion, by viewing this Revelation in all its several Degrees of Light, God hath varied and multiplied the Proofs of its Truth; not to be divided and separated, but united and made assistant to each other. Now therefore we need not hesitate to embrace this Proposition, “ whatever creates Faith, must first convince the Understanding.” Divinity is doubtless a Science; —it has its first Principles; and unless we begin

gin with these we shall never make any regular and enlarged Proficiency in the Things of Faith or Practice; afterwards, indeed, leaving the first Principles of the Oracles of God, we may go on unto *Perfection*. According to St. Paul, *the first Principles of the Oracles of God --- of the Doctrine of Christ --- the Rudiments and Elements*, are the natural Images, Figures, Types and Shadows in the Old Testament. Let this then be our School to take a regular Education in, let us study the Book of Nature in the Book of God; and God and spiritual Things by the Medium of natural: And tho' after all our Pains and the Means of Information, while we are here, *we see through a Glass darkly*, yet let us be thankful for it and use it diligently, till we shall *see Face to Face*, and *know even as we are known*. Now are we the *Sons of God*, and it doth not appear what we shall be: But we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, *i. e.* by immediate Vision: The Use of the *Glass* will then be no more, Faith will be turned into Sight, and Hope into Possession.

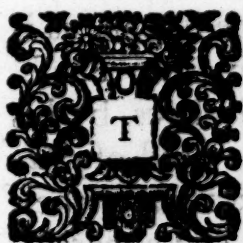


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ISAIAH xlv. 19.

Thus saith the Lord : — *I have not spoken in Secret, in a dark Place of the Earth : I said not unto the Seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain : I the Lord speak Righteousness, I declare Things that are right.*



THESE Words contain a positive Declaration, that a Revelation was communicated from God to his People ; and, that that Revelation was open, clear, determinate and full.

I have not spoken, saith the Lord, *in Secret*, more strictly to the Original,* in a Den, or, under a Viel ; *in a dark Place of the Earth* : in Contradistinction perhaps to the heathen Oracles, which the Priests were wont to deliver from Holes and dark Caverns : God, on the contrary, says, I spake openly, and in secret have I said nothing : *I said not unto the Seed of*
B
Jacob,

* כסתר in latibulo, vel velamine. Mar. Cal. Job xxiv. 15.

Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: The Translation here seems not exactly to express the Sense and Force of the Original; the Word render'd *in vain* is the same as is translated in the Beginning of the 1st Chap. of *Gen. without Form*; where *Moses* makes use of it, among others, to describe the chaotic State of the material World, while as yet Heaven and Earth were **בראשית** in a primary elementary State, wherein the Earth, while it's Parts were loose, disunited, and promiscuously mixed among the Waters, is justly said to be *without Form*. This Word, in a wonderfully expressive Manner, describes the Confusion, Obscurity, and Darkness of the oracular Answers, utter'd in loose Sentences admitting of double Constructions, and which were therefore reducible to no determinate Meaning, 'till the Event, as it were, shaped and formed them into Sense. The Reverse of this, God here declares, by his Prophet, were his Words to the Seed of *Jacob*, that their Meaning was determinate, their Sense clear and distinct, uniform and apparent, even as formed Nature, when its mighty Author pronounced it *very good*. The Text goes on, *seek ye me*, or, they sought me: *I the Lord speak Righteousness, I declare Things that are right.*

There have not been wanting some, who have advanced Notions that altogether contradict what are inculcated in these Words, such as, that Mankind, 'till the Coming of Christ, had received no clear explicit Revelation,

tion, but remain'd enveloped in Darkneſs and Ignorance, as it were, in a State of Nature; wherein Religion and Knowledge were in their Infancy and Childhood: It is even thought, that the Doctrines of future Rewards and Punishments, which is one of the firſt Principles of Religion, was not taught in the Old Teſtament; — that the *Jews* underſtood not the Spirit and Intention of their Types and Ceremonies; nay, it is inſinuated, that there was no Deſign in them, but that they were ſuperſtitious and heatheniſh.

Not to ſay, how contrary theſe Poſitions are to the ſeventh Article of our Church — the 2d Part of the *Homily on Faith*, and the Opinion of truly learned Men in all Ages, remarkably *Bochart* and *Gale*, who have drawn together a large Collection of Proofs — that the Patriarchs were poſſeſſed of all Wiſdom, natural as well as ſpiritual; and that other Nations furniſh'd themſelves with Knowledge as well as Merchandiſe from the *Jews* of *Phenicia* and *Egypt*: Indeed, that divine Revelation was the Source, tho' the *Phenicians* might be the immediate Streams, whence the *Grecians* drew even their Letters and the genuine Part of their Philoſophy and Theology: To paſs over theſe Authorities and Conſiderations, let us recur to the Bible itſelf, and take a View of the Patriarchal and *Mosaic* Diſpenſations, that we may diſcern with Clearneſs and Conviction, how ill grounded and erroneous are ſuch Opi-

nions: As we go along we will endeavour to establish more especially these three Propositions.

1st, That Man was taught the Doctrine of a future State, and how to attain it before and after the Fall; which we will consider particularly.

2dly, That the Patriarchs had an instituted Form of Worship, the capital Part of which was Sacrifice.

3dly, That Sacrifice was a Prefiguration of *Christ*, and so understood by the Patriarchs; who therefore, and the *Jews* under *Moses*, were true Believers, having respect unto the Promise; *Christ, the Redeemer of the World.*

First then; It is altogether incredible, that the first Race of Men should be ignorant of a future State, and by what Means it might be obtained, who had God for their Teacher, speaking to them immediately, and by Prophets inspired. The first Man is represented as having immediate Converse with his Creator, who taught him the Doctrine of eternal Rewards and Punishments, when he said, *In the Day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* *Adam* then must conclude with Certainty, that if he did not transgress he should not die; consequently he knew, that he was made for Immortality; and that he would have enjoyed Life in a future State had he remained innocent,

cent, will be evident presently. It is in plain, positive Words declared, that he did transgress; be the Manner of the Temptation to it, the Appearance of the Tempter, his Nature and that of the Transgression, what they will: None of these Circumstances, whatever Opinion Men entertain about them, can invalidate the Matter of Fact, namely, the Transgression, which is clearly asserted. *Adam* then by Transgression incurred the Penalty threatened: He died immediately in a spiritual Sense;—lost the Image of God, that Rectitude of Nature in which he was created;—forfeited all Title to Life, all Pretensions to Happiness, and subjected himself and Posterity to temporal and eternal Death. This is also evident, neither can it be disputed, that *Adam* hereby fell into a State quite the Reverse of that in which he had been placed by his Creator; or that a Recovery out of this State was absolutely necessary to his and his Posterity's Happiness. But what could have begotten him again to a lively Hope, except a Promise of Mercy from God? By his Disobedience he lost his Innocence, and therefore with his Assurance of the divine Favour; a Consciousness of Guilt would naturally introduce Doubtfulness and Diffidence of that Favour *here*, and of being filled with it *hereafter*. Had he then been left to himself, must he not have remained in the utmost Uncertainty and Perplexity? Had he been disposed to repent, what Assurance or even Hope could he have

con-

conceived of Pardon and Acceptance? What Foundation, *what healing Clause**, is there in Nature for either of these Supports? A Consideration of the moral Attributes of God, that as his Mercy is, so is his Justice, would have been rather the Cause than the Remedy of Confusion and Despair. In short, most evident it must be to every candid and dispassionate Inquirer, that nothing could possibly open a Way to Certainty and Consolation, but a Promise of Pardon from God himself.

Now the Church has in all Ages held it for a certain Truth, that a Promise of Mercy was delivered to the first Pair when it was declared, that *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head*. But some Men, who hereby seem disposed to be as blind as the Serpent is deaf, which refuseth *to hear the Voice of the Charmer*, *charm* he never so wisely, are pleased to reject this Interpretation,† and even the historical Sense of the Creation and Formation of Things, of Man's Trial, Fall and Recovery, contending, that it is in no degree probable, but utterly absurd and contradictory to Reason, impossible and inconsistent with the Attributes of God, and that the whole can be no otherwise considered than as one of those instructive and moral Fictions, to which we may give the Name of Apologue, or Fable,

* Exam. p. 103.

† Exam. p. 131, 2, 3. 136. 102. 115. 125. 135.

ble, or Allegory, or of any thing rather than of an historical Narration.

'Tis exceedingly rash, not to say worse, thus determinately to sit in Judgment upon the Word of God. There are many Difficulties in the Scriptures, which mere classical Learning and Translations will never enable a Man to understand: But no Learning should prompt him to censure them, or call their Truth in question; indeed no true Learning will. Upon Things that are hard to be understood, Humility should teach every Man to suspend, tho' not his Inquiry, yet his Judgment, lest he wrest them unto his own Destruction. Men would never give Offence to others, nor incur Condemnation themselves, would they embrace the plain Truths of Scripture with Faith and Thankfulness, and propose their Opinions upon abstruse Points with Modesty and Submission. But let us try to remove the above Objections and Interpretations, and prove that the *Mosaic* Account is true History of Matters of Fact.

An Allegory is that in which, under borrowed Characters and Allusions, is shadowed some real Action or moral Instruction; or, to keep more strictly to it's Derivation (*αλλος alius, αγορευω dico*) 'tis that, in which one Thing is related and another Thing is understood. From this Definition 'tis very apparent, that an Allegory must have two Senses, the literal and mystical; and, for that Reason, it must convey it's Instruction under borrowed Characters
and

and Allusions *throughout* : For that Relation, in which any one Person or Thing is real and subject to no secondary Meaning or Application cannot be considered as an Allegory. It is therefore incumbent on those, who contend that the *Mosaic* Account of the Creation and Formation of Things, of Man's Trial, Fall and Recovery, is an Allegory, Apologue or Fable, to prove, that the Persons, Things and Actions are all imaginary, and to assign to each assumed Character it's proper Meaning and Intention : For Instance, when 'tis said that God created *the Heavens and Earth, that now are, in a first Estate*, and out of that raised this beautiful, uniform System of Nature, they must shew, that we are not to rest in the literal Meaning of the Words *God, Heaven and Earth*; but that hereby some other Persons, Things and Actions are pointed at or represented.

Again, When 'tis said that the Lord God formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, planted a Garden, placed Man in it, warned him against eating of a particular Tree, and made a Help-meet for him, it must be proved, that these are feigned Persons and Things. Lastly, when 'tis related, that the Man and the Woman did, at the Instigation of a Tempter, eat of the forbidden Tree, it must be shewn that *Adam* and *Eve* are not the real, but fictitious Characters. Now, since 'tis impossible to do this, we may infallibly conclude,

clude, that this Account cannot be considered as an Apologue, Fable, or Allegory. Let us then try if the historical Sense be not possible, probable, and agreeable to Reason.

Why should the Reality of a Tree named *the Tree of Life*, and *the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*, be thought a Thing impossible, absurd, or incredible? Could not the same Being, that divided the Light from the Darkness and called the Light Day, make to grow out of the Ground two Trees for a peculiar Use, and give them Names expressive of such Use? Might not Life, or Living, be predicated of a Tree with as much Propriety as of *Waters* || and *Bread*?* And might not the Prohibition of eating of a Tree be as much real and significant, as that of eating Blood and certain Animals? Sacrifice also, Circumcision, and many other Particulars, were required by God under the Patriarchal and *Mosaic* Dispensations, and their Neglect made criminal, tho' each of them were temporary, positive, and symbolical Institutions: Indeed, the Design of these is signify'd at their Institution, which enables us to discern their Wisdom: And had the Purpose of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* been express'd, we should have been at no Loss to determine the Occasion of it's Name, the Reason and Wisdom of it's Institution, and how eating of it was a capital Sin.

C

Again:

|| Num. xix. 17. John iv. 10.

* John vi. 51.

Again: With respect to the Power of that Enemy of Mankind we call the Devil, most certainly it was inconceivably great before the coming of *Christ*, who was to conquer him. Was he not a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all *Abab's* * Prophets? Did he not afflict *Job*? In the *New Testament*, he is called *the strong Man*†, — *the Prince of this World to be cast out*‡ — *the Prince of the Power of the Air* — that could transform himself into an *Angel of § Light* — is represented as possessing Men's Bodies at the coming of *Christ*, and controuling Free Agents, and *speaking in them*||; which is certainly a Mark of greater Power than to controul passive Beings; tho' these are all Exertions of Power greater than actuating a Serpent, supposing this to be the Case; but whether it be or not, how is it possible for Man to determine, if the Scriptures have not? However, the above Instances are sufficient to prove 'tis no Impossibility; and since 'tis Matter of Fact, that he had and did exercise such great Power, it is therefore most certain, that he did it consistently with the Attributes, and by the Permission of God, without becoming, I know not what, second independent Being. Thus far no Impossibilities or Absurdities *which Reason must wink at*, no Incredibilities *which Faith must digest* §§, nor any thing that interferes with the Attributes of God, attend the historical Sense,

* 1 Kings xxii. 22. † John xii. 31. ‡ 2 Cor. xi. 14.
§ Eph. ii. 2. || Mat. viii. 29. §§ Exam. p. 103.

Sense, tho' we allow some Difficulties may: But then none of these Difficulties are such as we are materially concerned to have cleared, nor can our Ignorance of them at all affect the Matters of Fact in which we are interested, and which are clearly and positively determined by the Scriptures, namely, that *Adam* transgressed* — that the Devil is called the Serpent* — that *he beguiled Eve*† — that the Seed is *Christ*‡, *the God of Peace, who will bruise Satan under our Feet*§. And if we adhere to this, what avail the Inquiries and Hesitations of the Disputor, who can easily ask more Questions than he or any Man perhaps can resolve.

Now that the above Particulars, which are Difficulties to us, were so to those to whom *Moses* wrote, surely no just Reason can be assigned; but none at all, that they were not clear to *Adam*, who could want no Means of acquiring a perfect Knowledge of the Design of every thing in the Garden of *Eden*, as well as the Propriety and Significancy of the Names of Persons and Things. Now that Man was again, and from this Time, instructed how to to please God and attain Life, must be evident from a Reflection upon what is said on *Abel's* Acceptance, *Enoch's* Translation, the Faith and Behaviour of *Noah*, *Abraham* and all the Elders. Their Faith and Actions were Effects that must be owing to some Cause, and no other

C 2

Cause

* Revel. xii. 9. xx. 2. † 2 Cor. xi. 3. ‡ Gal. iii. 16, 19.
§ Rom. xvi. 20.

Cause can with any Propriety be assigned, than that of a divine Promise of Life and Acceptance. 'Tis remarked, that *Enoch walked with God**, for which he was translated, that *he should not see Death†*. This was a known Matter of Fact, publishing to all Men the Doctrine of a future State and it's Reward. The Apostle to the *Hebrews* also affirms, that *Abraham* looked for a City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God† — that all the Elders died in *Faith*, and desired a better Country, *i.e.* an *heavenly* — that therefore God was called their God, who hath prepared for them a *City* — and that others also were tortured not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better *Resurrection†*.

Lastly :

That the Life *Adam* would have enjoyed, had he remained innocent, was to have been in a future State, is most evident from a Consideration of the Purpose of *Christ's* coming into the World, which was to restore what was lost in *him*. This, we are assured by the Scriptures over and over again, is eternal Life in another State: *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. Death reigned from Adam to Moses: But as, by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even so, by the Righteousness of one, the Free Gift came upon all Men unto Justification of Life: For, as by one Man's Disobedience many*

* Gen. v. 24. † Heb. xi. 5. 13. 16. 35.

*many were made Sinners; so, by the Obedience of one, shall many be made righteous**. God hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away reserved in Heaven†. Such and more is the Evidence that the Patriarchs were acquainted with the Doctrine of a future State, and how to attain it.

Proceed we now to our second Proposition; namely, that the Patriarchs had an instituted Worship, the capital Part of which was Sacrifice.

Cain and Abel brought their Offerings at the End of Days, says the Original, and the Margin of our Bibles; which Expression puts it beyond Dispute, that the Institution of Sacrificature commenced, and Sacrificing had been a Practice before this Time: And by whom instituted, the Time and Occasion of it's Institution, none are so blind as not to be able to see, but those who are determined not to see. Add to this, the Distinction of clean and unclean Beasts observed by *Noah* at his Entrance into the Ark; — his offering Sacrifice immediately after his Deliverance, without any new Direction; — the rest of the Patriarchs also offering Sacrifice, remarkably *Jacob* at *Beer-sheba*, erecting and consecrating Altars in many Places, where he was honoured with the divine
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* Rom. v. 14. 18. 19. † 1 Pet. i. 3. 4.

Presence and Appearance, and affixing to them the expressive Names of *Beth-el*, *Peni-el*, and the like : These are so many Memorials of fixed Places of Worship; the Sacrifices are such Proofs of an instituted public Form, and stand forth so full to Observation, that a Disregard of them can be owing to nothing but wilful Blindness. Moreover, what is related * of *Abraham's obeying the Voice of God, keeping his Charge, his Commandments, his Statutes and his Laws*, is positive Proof of some given Directions : Indeed these Expressions comprehend all the various Branches and Divisions of Laws and Rules, into which that Body of Laws, afterwards delivered at Mount *Sinai*, and committed to Writing, was classed and distinguished. The Apostle to the *Galatians* observes, *the Law was added because of Transgressions*. This is another manifest Proof that some Institution subsisted before, which *the Law could not disannul*. To give briefly the Evidence by which our second Proposition is supported, in the Words of a most approved Writer† : “ From the Scriptures, it appears, “ that before the Publication of the Law in “ *Sinai*, Believers and Unbelievers were in “ Practice and Possession of many or most of “ these Rites and Institutions, which must “ have depended on some antecedent Authority that was common to all. And by universal

* Gen. xxvi. 5.

† The Author of *Reflections on the Sources of Incredulity*.

“ verbal Consent of all profane Authors it ap-
 “ pears, that after the *Æra of Moses*, the same
 “ Institutions and Observances had taken Place
 “ over all the known World, tho’ no body
 “ supposes they owed their Origin to the Laws
 “ of a Nation, that the rest of the World
 “ held in Dislike and Contempt. To instance
 “ in a few : Offering Sacrifice and that by
 “ *Fire**, was in Use before the written Law ;
Abel

* So early as from the Time of *Cain* and *Abel* there appear to have been in Practice two Sorts of Offerings or Sacrifices — the Fruits of the Earth, and Animals. It may be said, that Men might, from the Dictates of Nature, be induced to present to God the First-fruits or Part of the Crop of Vegetables, as a proper Acknowledgment or Quit-Rent due to the Creator and Giver of all Things ; that it might be as natural to do this as it is for us to say Grace before Meat : But surely natural Reason could never induce Men to distinguish Animals into clean and unclean ; to think that the Author and Giver of Life would be pleased with the untimely and violent Death of his Creatures ; much less could it ever put it into Men’s Heads, so soon too, to offer them up by *Fire*, to avoid eating the *Blood* and the *Fat*, pouring the one on the Ground and burning the other. There does not appear therefore so much as the Shadow of an Argument in Support, that the Offering of Creatures could have it’s Rise from Nature. Every Effect must have some Cause ; and, as this evidently appears to be an Effect altogether extraordinary and out of Nature, it must owe it’s Origin to a supernatural Efficient : And the Impossibility (*Psalms* l. 13. *Heb.* x. 4.) that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should take away Sin, ought to convince us, that it’s Design was only typical and prefigurative of some real Attonement to be exhibited for Mankind in the Fulness of Time. It may be useful to observe, that the Scriptures often relate the Effect or Action, and leave their Cause and final Use to be inferred, which is easily done from the Context, other Parts of Scripture, &c. This is one great Beauty of the Scripture and Means of it’s Conciseness, tho’ it comprehends a History of many thousand Years, &c. Thus in the Book of *Genesis* there is frequent Mention of the Practice of Sacrifice, but no particular Account of it’s Origin ; yet, since it is explained at large in the other Books,
we

“ *Abel* offered ; *Noah* sacrificed ; *Abraham*
 “ and his Cotemporaries did so ; *Job* practiced
 “ it ; it was used by *Balaam* ; it was practiced
 “ for Thanksgiving ; for binding Covenants ;
 “ at the same time it is obvious, that naturally
 “ it had no Tendency to either of these Ends ;
 “ and, as it was universal, must needs owe it’s
 “ Beginning to an Institution that was authora-
 “ tive over all.”

It now remaineth to prove our third Propo-
 sition, that Sacrifice was a Prefiguration of
Christ, and so understood by the Patriarchs,
 who therefore, and the *Jews* under the *Mosaic*
Dispensation, were true Believers.

The Banishment of *Cain* caused a sort of
Interregnum or Suspension of the Line of the
Messiah, nay, in some sort even of Hope, if
 not also of Church Services. All which Things
 took Place again in *Enos* the First-born of
Seth : With him revived the Line, Hopes and
 Expectations of the *Messiah* ; then began Men
 to call upon *the Name of the Lord*. The Ge-
 neology of *Christ* is carried on to *Noah*, with
 whom and the other Patriarchs was renewed the

we have all the Reason in the World to conclude it to be of divine
 Institution. The four first Chapters of *Genesis* are remarkably con-
 cise, but wonderfully comprehensive : They are the Marrow and
 an Epitomy of the whole Bible, and their Beauty cannot be dis-
 cerned without great Attention and nice Observation ; in short,
 without comparing every Word and Sentence therein with other
 Parts of Scripture, and considering these as a Comment upon
 them.

the same Covenant of Mercy which had been revealed to *Adam*. The Apostle to the *Galatians* says§§, God preached before the *Gospel* unto *Abraham*; he believed God; Righteousness was imputed to him; and in his *Seed* were all the Nations of the Earth to be blessed: In a Word, all the Patriarchs from *Adam* to *Joseph*, who taught *Pharoah's Senators Wisdom*, kept their Eye upon the *Covenant of Mercy*, embraced it, offered Sacrifice at stated Times, and were acquainted with it's Design.

But this seems to be doubted, nay to all Appearance is called in Question even the Intention of Sacrifice as well as the Perspicuity of it's Meaning*; but on what Authority, from Scripture or Reason, does not appear. Is any such Thing so much as hinted at in the *Old Testament*? or by *Christ* and his Apostles? *Christ* says, *the Law prophesied until John*†: *St. Paul*, — *that Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness*‡ — *that the Law is spiritual, having a Shadow of good Things to come*§. *Our Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ*||; which it could never have done unless it instructed them in the Knowledge of *Christ*; but this it certainly did in a most evident and determinate Manner: For even common Sense tells us, that explaining Things by Representations, Types, and Figures, is the most intelligible Method in

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§§ Gal. iii. 8. * Exam. p. 141, 6, 8, 9.

† Mat. xi. 13. ‡ Rom. 10. 4. § Heb. x. Rom. vii. 14.

|| Gal. iii. 24.

the World, and levelled to all Capacities : 'Tis a Method of Instruction, much less liable to Mistake than that of Words ; which, as they are substituted for Things, and bear no Likeness of the Things spoken of, often occasion Confusion ; for Words never convey a determinate Sense, or Idea, unless they bring to the Mind, or excite in us those Impressions, which external Objects make on our Senses. A Writer may lay out the most fanciful Description of a Walk, or Landskip, that Words or Imagination can form, but the Reader or Hearer will have no Conception of it, nor ever remember it, unless he sees what is so describ'd, or can liken it to some other he has seen : If a Preceptor also teaches any Art or Science by technical Terms, or mere Words, how can his Pupil be blameable for not understanding him ? The Dulness is not in the Scholar, but the Master, for not laying aside mere Words and giving him Ideas, by drawing Schemes, Figures, and Diagrams : These his Senses can take in, and his Mind can judge of.

As *Adam* had no other Medium, at least that we can conceive, by which he could get Ideas, than we have, namely, Sensation, it was necessary that he should be taught invisible Things by visible. This was the Method, call it Hieroglyphical, Typical, or what you will, which God took to inform Mankind of his Nature and Attributes, his Will and the Things of another World : He taught them
spiritual

spiritual Things and Actions by natural Representations: This was bringing Things down to Sense, and fixing their Meaning, by presenting them before their Eyes; so that Sacrifice, by being daily offered, was a standing Memento of a Redeemer —— a most instructive Picture of the Sufferings and Benefits of a Messiah, drawn more to the Life than Words could have represented, with greater Expression and more affecting Solemnity than the most pathetic Language could have described; Indeed, the whole Series of Types under the Patriarchal, as well as *Mosaic* Dispensations, were material Actions and Things contriv'd to convey spiritual Ideas, like Baptism and the Lord's Supper with us —— *outward Signs of an inward and spiritual Grace*: In like Manner too with them, as with us, the Signs and the Thing signify'd bore the same Name. Now why should we think they did not understand their Types as well as we do our Memorial? As God's Rejection of *Cain* is absolute Proof, either that he brought an Offering incomplete in Kind and Sort, or at least that he presented it unworthily, as Communicants receive the Sacrament to their own Condemnation, by *not considering* the Lord's Body; so is the Respect had to *Abel*, that his Offering was complete and presented with a right View; the Apostle says, by *Faith*, *Abel* offered unto God a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain*, by which he obtained Witness that he was *righteous*,

teous, God testifying of his Gifts. 'Tis said of *Noah* also that he * *buildd an Altar unto Jehova, and took of every clean Beast, and of every clean Fowl, and offered Burnt-offerings on the Altar. And Jehova smelled a sweet Savour.* The same might be observ'd of the rest of the Patriarchs: and doubtless many others had the same Thoughts of Sacrifice: for there is no Reason to conclude, that those few mentioned by *Moses* were all who thus believ'd, and were therefore acceptable to God. For suppose in a History of our own Church only a few select Persons should be recorded, who had right Apprehensions of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper — were eminent for their Belief in *Jesus Christ* and another Life; Wou'd it be a fair Deduction for Posterity to make, that only those few had such a Judgment of Things, and that all the rest of the Nation were Infidels and altogether ignorant of the first Principles of Religion? Indeed, the Bulk of Mankind have in all Ages been unwise, and unattentive to the Things of another World.

Against this it may be urg'd, that 'tis Matter of Fact that the *Jews* were grossly unattentive to the spiritual Meaning of their Ceremonies: For that God, by his Prophets, often complains of their Perverseness and Blindness herein, remarkably by the Prophet *Iſaiah* — *He that sacrificeth a Lamb doth it as if he cut off a Dog's Neck; he that offereth an Oblation,*
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* Gen. viii. 20. 21.

as if he offer'd Swine's Blood; he that burneth Incense, as if he blessed an Idol. Christ too and his Apostles often charge them with *Unbelief*. But what does this prove? Not surely that their Ignorance was owing to any Deficiency or Obscurity in God's revealed Will; because then how cou'd they be blameable, much less punishable? Nor does this prove that the Patriarchs were Heathens, because most of their Sons were so: Bad Men were in every Age, and the later *Jews* might in general very possibly pervert and lose Sight of the Intention of their Law, as we see *some Christians* can—of the Gospel; but that the first receiv'd it with no better Mind and Judgment, or that all were Unbelievers because many were, is no just Conclusion. As a Nation, indeed, the *Jews* were always a stiff-neck'd People and continued so, 'till, for a general Corruption in Principles and Actions, God carried them into a State of Captivity, wherein they overtook, if not even out-strip'd the Heathens in Ignorance and Wickedness. *Jerusalem*, says God, * hath changed my Judgments into Wickedness *more than the Nations*, and my Statutes *more than the Countries that are round about her*—yea they have chosen *their own Ways*, and their Soul delighteth in *their Abominations*†. Their frequent Punishment for Unbelief under all God's Instructions is set forth by *St. Paul* as an Example, warning us not to
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* Ezekiel, v. 6.

† Isa. v. 6.

provoke nor tempt *Christ*, as *they* also tempted :
 * *I wou'd not*, says he, *Brethren*, *that ye*
shou'd be ignorant how that all our Fathers
were under a Cloud, and all passed through the
Sea ; and were all baptiz'd unto Moses in the
Cloud, and in the Sea ; and did all eat the same
spiritual Meat ; and did all drink the same spiri-
tual Drink : for they drank of that spiritual Rock
that followed them : And that Rock was Christ.
But with many of them God was not well pleased :
For they were overthrown in the Wilderness.
 On another Occasion, he says, † *the Gospel*
was preached to them : but the Word did not
profit them, not being mix'd with Faith in them
that heard it : ‡ And that they enter'd not into
the Rest of God because of Unbelief. § Now
all these Things happen'd unto them for Ensam-
ples : and they are written for our Admonition
upon whom the Ends of the World are come :
 || *Let us labour therefore to enter that Rest, least*
any Man fall after the same Example of Unbelief.

Now these Instances are as much a Proof,
 that they enjoy'd all Means of Instruction and
 Grace, and that many made a proper Improve-
 ment under them, as that some did not and
 were therefore punishable for their Unbelief :
 'Tis true, with many of them God was not
 well pleased ; but 'tis no less true also that with
 some of them God was well pleased, who did
 therefore

* 1 Cor. x. 1. † Heb. iv. 2. ‡ Ver. 6. § 1 Cor. x. 11.
 || Heb. iv. 11.

therefore enter into his Rest. Moreover, besides many single Instances of Believers, do we not read of seven thousand at once that had not bowed the Knee to *Baal*? And even after the Return from their Captivity there are recorded in the Gospels many Individuals, who looked for a *spiritual* Redemption in *Israel*. The Woman of *Samaria* is a remarkable Instance, who said, — * *I know that Messiahs cometh, which is called Christ: When he is come, he will tell us all Things:* And many even of the *Samaritans* also, when they heard Christ, said, † *Now we believe and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World.* But good old *Simeon* was a burning and shining Light, who, when he saw the *Desire* of all Nations with his bodily Eyes, whom he had long seen with the Eye of Faith, was satisfy'd and even willing to live no longer — *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace; for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.* Thus then we have also on our Side Matter of Fact for the Support of our Third Proposition,

That the Ritual of the Old Testament prefigur'd Christ; and that the Patriarchs, and many of the *Jews* even in the most corrupt Times, understood this to be the Intention of their Types and Ceremonies; who were therefore true Believers.

To

* John iv. 25.

† V. 42.

To conclude: I hope these few Out-lines afford sufficient Proof and Conviction that God reveal'd himself *clearly* and *amply* to his first People: The Patriarchal Dispensation, we see, was, for Sum and Substance, the same with the *Mosaic*; and therefore the Intention of both was the same. Christ, at his Appearance, declar'd, That he came not to *destroy* the Law and the Prophets, but to *fulfill*; to realize the Types and accomplish the Prophecies. Let us therefore reject whatever is advanc'd * *contrary to sound Doctrine*, and continue in the Things which we have learned and have been assured of from † the Scriptures; which are able to make us wise unto Salvation, thro' Faith, which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness: That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnish'd unto every good Work.

* 1 Tim. i. 10.

† 1 Tim. iv. 5. 7.



HEBREWS



HEBREWS xi. 4.

By Faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain.



MOSES plainly and positively expresses a Difference between the Offerings of the two Brothers, and specifies their Nature and Sort : The Apostle as plainly and positively declares the Mind and View with which they brought their Offerings — that it was *Faith*, which stamped the Excellency on *Abel's* Sacrifice, and that *Cain's* Offering was rejected by God, because it wanted this Recommendation : This Matter of Fact, declared in the Text in positive and express Words, we will proceed to consider in the following Manner, by endeavouring to prove,

First, That by Faith here is meant more than a Belief of the Existence of God, or his Creation of the World.

Secondly, and *positively*, That by it is meant a Belief in Christ. After which we will conclude with some Observations and Reflections,

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that will naturally arise from the Proof of the Premises.

First then : That by Faith is meant more than barely the believing the Existence of God, or his Creation of the World, will be evident from the Consideration of one Circumstance — that of *Cain's Offering*.

In the 4th Chapter of *Genesis* it is written, *Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto* JEHOVAH, the incommunicable and distinguishing Name of the true God, the God of *Israel*. No Language could, in more explicit Terms, describe a Person to be under a full Conviction of the Existence of a first independent Cause, the Creator of all Things, and acknowledging him to be the Governor of the World, than this Verse does *Cain*; who is here, as well as in my Text, represented, as entertaining a settled Persuasion of the Existence of a God, and making open Declaration of his Providence. He appears with his Brother at a fixed, and, we may suppose, public Place of Worship; at an usual, appointed Time — *the End of Days*; brings his Offering, as a Tender due to the Lord of the Universe, thereby acknowledging his Superintendency, and full Right to the Service of his Creatures. Hence 'tis most evident, that *Cain* was not the least tinctured with Atheism.* A Charge of deny-
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* Neither does the Text yield the least Intimation, that *Cain* came with an envious and hypocritical Heart, harbouring vicious Lusts

ing a God, he would doubtless have looked upon as a most gross Affront to his Understanding, and, an Attempt to persuade him out of his Opinion, Assurance, and *Demonstration* of the Existence of God — that he created all Things, is to be worshipped and adored, as

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Lusts, and projecting malicious Designs, Exam. p. 143. Indeed, how should he? What could possibly raise these turbulent Passions in *Cain's* Breast, who was the elder Brother, and of course Heir to the greater Portion? *Abel* might indeed have envied *Cain*, and projected malicious Designs; but these Effects could not be produced in *Cain*, on whose Side there was no natural Cause: Still it may be true, that *the different Treatment which the two Brothers received from God, flowed* (primarily) *from the different Nature of the Men*; yet secondarily too, *of the Offerings*: For these appear to be the different Actions of which their different Natures, Thoughts, and Views were productive. Men may, before God, who sees into the Heart, and discerns the very Spring of our Actions, be guilty of mental, as well as actual Ill; and this doubtless was *Cain's* Case: But as thus far, and in the then Circumstances of Things, there appears not any Temptation that could induce him to violate any social Duty, so much as even in Thought, nor is there the least Intimation that he did, we are led by the History to make no other Conclusion, than that he sinned against God only, and that by an Offering presented *certainly* without Faith, and pretty evidently incomplete and improper: *Abel* brought of the Firstlings of his Flock, and of the *Fat*; which *Cain* avoiding to do, thereby carried his Rebellion against God into *Overt-Act*, not being content to be indifferent and unattentive in Thought to God's Method of saving fallen Man by a Surety, of remitting Sin by shedding of Blood. St. *Jude* ranks *Cain* with ungodly Men, who turn the Grace of God into Lasciviousness, and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. St. *John* also says, *Cain* slew his Brother, because his own Works were evil. What could those Works be? None are intimated preceding the Murder of his Brother, except his Offering, which hence, 'tis very plain, was improper and evil. This appears to be the Sense of the Words, and is countenanced by the whole Tenor of Scripture, and not that put upon them by the *Examiner*, (p. 143, 144) in a Paraphrase of strange Latitude, and unsupported by the Context, or even one Passage of Scripture.

an Insult upon common Sense and Reason. What Deist pretends to more Regularity of Conduct, to greater Exactness of Sentiment, or Soundness of Principle, than appears hitherto in the Character of *Cain*? Yet the Scriptures expressly teach us, that *Cain*, and his Offering, were rejected by God; and that he was without Faith. The Deduction therefore, that by Faith is meant more than a Belief of the Existence of God, or his Creation of the World, is clear and conclusive.

Proceed we then to the Proof of our 2d Proposition—That by Faith is principally meant a Belief in Christ, and the Promises of God in Him.

Now this is supported by direct Proof, the express Word, and the whole Tenor of Scripture.

The Apostle begins the Chapter, whence I have chosen my Text, with this general Definition of Faith, That 'tis *the Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen*. By which we are taught, that divine Faith is an Assent of the Mind to Propositions or Matters of Fact not seen, therefore not knowable but by the Relation and Testimony of God: Hence it implies, in its very Nature, a preceding Revelation of something transacted already, or a Promise of something yet in Futurity; which Faith, in Proportion as that, which is related or promised, convinces the Understanding, becomes a Basis and Foundation of Things hoped for, as well as the Evidence

dence of the Truth and Certainty of Things not seen.

In the 7th Verse, *Noah's* Attention to the Warning of God of Things not seen as yet, and his Preparation of the Ark, are said to intitle him to become Heir to the Righteousness which is by Faith. Now who, that believes the *Bible*, can entertain the least Doubt, whether by being Heir to the Righteousness which is by Faith, is signified the Promise which was made to *Noah*, that Christ should descend from his Loins, by Virtue of whose perfect Righteousness, apprehended by Faith, he and all Men are counted righteous before God? *St. Paul*,* in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Hebrews*, interprets the Promise made unto *Abraham*, — *That he should be the Heir of the World* in this Sense. The Righteousness also we obtain by Faith in Christ is called, the † *Righteousness of God* — the *Righteousness of Faith*. — || Christ is called, *the Lord our Righteousness*, who of God is made unto us *Wisdom* and *Righteousness*, and *Sanctification*, and *Redemption*. ‡

Again :

In the 26th Verse, *Moses* is said expressly to have kept his Eye upon Christ, and the Reward promised by him, when by Faith he refused to be called the Son of *Pharoah's* Daughter; choosing rather to suffer Affliction with the

* Rom. iv. 13. Heb. vi. 17. † Rom. i. 17. x. 3, 4, 13.
|| Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season — forsook *Ægypt*, and kept the Passover, *esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Ægypt: for he had Respect* (he look'd) *unto the Recompence of the Reward.* This Testimony concerning *Moses's* Faith is so explicit, that it leaves no possible Room for Quibble; the Object of which is here expressly determined to be *Christ*. Since then Faith in this Instance is explained to be a Respect unto Christ, we are supported by the Use and Analogy of Language, as well as all the Rules of Interpretation, to say, it has the same Meaning in every Instance of this Chapter, unless the Writer had given us Notice of his using the same Term in a new Sense; but this he is so far from doing, that, without signifying any Exception or Difference he declares — * *These all died in the Faith*; and — † *These all having obtained a good || Report through Faith,*
re-

* 13 Ver.

† 39. Ver.

|| 'Tis worth observing, that the *Greek* Word here rendered, *obtained a good Report*, is the same as is rendered above, *ver. 4. obtained Witness*. This latter seems to be the better Translation, because the Term *Report* may be apt to lead the *English* Reader to imagine, that nothing more is meant by it than that they obtained, as we generally understand by it, a good Character among Men; whereas the Original signifies, that they by Faith received Testimony, or obtained Witness of God, as *Abel* did, that they were righteous. The Apostle says, *God testified of Abel's Gifts*, whether by Fire, Voice, or what peculiar Sign, is not at all necessary to be determined; neither does the Want of it's Determination destroy the Certainty that God did, by some known Sign, signify his Rejection of *Cain's* and his Approbation of *Abel's* Offering. Had Dr. *Middleton* attended to this, he might have spared his *Sneer* in p. 144, 145, 146.

received not the Promise, *i. e.* did not live to see the promis'd *Seed*, who was *the Desire of all Nations*, actually come in the *Flesh*: These were doubtless some of those many ‡ Prophets, Kings and Righteous Men, who our Lord told his Disciples, desired to see those Things which they saw, and had not seen them. We have also positive Proof, that by Faith is meant believing in Christ, in the 1st and 2d Verse of the twelfth Chapter, wherein the Apostle refers to the preceding List of Worthies, and exhorts the *Hebrews* to imitate the Example of their Faith and Practice: Wherefore, says he, seeing we are compassed about with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with Patience the Race set before us, looking unto *Jesus the Author and Finisher of the Faith*. By Cloud, is meant a large Number or Multitude. The Words then may be thus paraphrased: We have taken a View of the Church from the first to the last, and behold in every Point of Time many Believers, who incircle us (*περικυκλουν*) and unanimously testify their Faith in the promised Redeemer, and thereby as it were, encourage us to throw off every Incumbrance, and with Manly Resolution to run the Christian Race, always keeping our Eye upon Christ, the President,

‡ Mat. xiii. 17. Luke x. 24.

fidēt, ἀρχηγός, || or supreme Leader and τελειότης, him who sits as Umpire, adjudging the Prize to the Conquerors. Hence we are taught, that Christ is the Director and Finisher of Faith, in him it begins and ends, who is therefore on another Occasion stiled the *Alpha* and *Omega*, and proclaimed so by the whole Tenor of Scripture, which is another very material Support of our Interpretation.

The Object of Faith is the Word of God in general, and the great Point the whole Scripture has in View, is to set forth the Mercy of God in Christ Jesus: This is frequently expressed by the Term Faith, oftentimes standing alone, and sometimes joined with Christ: Thus we read — a Company of the Priests were obedient to the *Faith** --- seeking to turn away the Deputy from the *Faith* † --- exhorting them to continue in the *Faith* ‡ --- *Stephen* a Man full of *Faith* § --- *Fælix* heard *Paul* concerning the *Faith in Christ*** --- and, *Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*. ||| *This is the Word of Faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine Heart, that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved* §§. These Proofs are sufficient to induce us to conclude, that
by

|| Christ is stiled ἀρχηγός in three other Places of the New Testament, *Act*. iii. 15, v. 31. *Heb*. ii. 10. *N. B.* In the Original 'tis τῆς πίστεως only: The Translators have inserted *our*, which is a Blemish, as indeed are most of their Insertions.

* *Acts* vi. 7. † xiii. 8. ‡ xiv. 22. § vi. 5.

** xxiv. 24. ||| xx. 21. §§ *Rom*. x. 8, 9.

by the Faith ---- of *Abel* ---- the Elders ---- the Fathers, and all the holy Prophets, is signified, that they had Respect unto Christ, and, the Reward offered by him of eternal Life: And our great and wise Reformers teach sound and glorious Divinity when they tell us, “ All these
 “ Fathers, Martyrs, and other holy Men, had
 “ their Faith surely fixed in God, when all the
 “ World was against them. They did not
 “ only know God to be the Lord, Maker and
 “ Governor of the World; but also they had
 “ a special Confidence and Trust, that he was
 “ and would be their God, their Comforter,
 “ Aider, Helper, Maintainer and Defender.
 “ This is the Christian Faith, which these holy
 “ Men had, and we ought also to have. And
 “ altho’ they were not named Christian Men,
 “ yet was it a Christian Faith that they had;
 “ for they looked for all Benefits of God the
 “ Father, thro’ the Merits of his Son Jesus
 “ Christ, as we now do. This Difference is
 “ between them and us, that they looked
 “ when Christ should come, and we be in the
 “ Time when he is come. Wherefore, saith
 “ St. *Augustine*, the Time is altered and
 “ changed, but not the Faith.”

The Doctrines and Observations I shall deduce from the Proof of the two preceding Propositions, and confirm by the express Authority of Scripture, are these three;

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1st, That Christ was promised, believed in, preached and prophecied of from the Fall to *Moses*.

2d, That Christ and his Apostles appeal to such Testimony, in Proof and Support of Christianity.

3d, That the true Religion, instituted by God, has been one and the same from the Fall of *Adam*, subsisting ever upon the same Principles of Faith*.

To confirm our first Observation, little more need be done, than reminding you of what has been already laid down relating to this Point.

The Apostle in this Chapter takes a View of the Elders from *Abel* to *Abraham*, and asserts expressly, *These all died in Faith*; proceeds on to *Joseph*, the last of the Patriarchs, who, he also proves, died in Faith, *i. e.* in the Faith of Christ, as has been evinced by many conclusive Proofs: From what has likewise been observed, on the Apostle's Definition of Faith 'tis evident, that it depends on some external Information or Promise for it's very Being and Support; because what comes under the Cognizance of our own Senses, we are said to know, not to believe: Information of this sort is properly Experience not Faith, any more than Hope that is seen is Hope; for what a Man seeth, he no longer hopeth for nor believeth in: Faith then terminates in Vision, and
Hope

* Page 75, Bishop of London's Disc.

Hope in Possession. Neither again can the Deductions from bare Reason, without any revealed Data, be properly called Faith, Evidence and Certainty, but mere Hypothesis or Opinion. We may infallibly conclude then, from the Meaning and Use of Language, that as human Faith owes it's Foundation to human Testimony; so divine Faith must to a preceding Revelation and Promise immediately from God, or mediately by Prophets inspired. Now we have express Evidence, that Prophets subsisted in the Patriarchal Age; their Names are particularly specified, as--*Abel* by Christ* — *Enoch* by St. *Jude* — *Noah* was a Preacher of that Righteousness, of which he became Heir by Faith†. The Psalmist, speaking of the State of the Patriarchs from *Abraham* to *Moses*, calls them Prophets -- *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no Harm.*‡ The Commission and Business of Prophets was to foretel Events, and explain God's Word and Institutions; and that the Redemption of Mankind by Jesus Christ was one great, if not the chief Subject of their Discourse and Prophecy, the above Instances are absolute Proofs. Lastly, a Promise is to all Intents and Purposes a Prophecy, which is speaking of an Event yet in Futurity. From the Foundation then of Faith and the Nature of a Promise, we may beyond all Contradiction

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infer,

* Luke xi. 50. † 2 Pet. ii. 5. ‡ Ps. cv. 15.

infer, that Christ was promised, because believed in, and prophesied of, because promised. But what is more, this Reasoning is confirmed by the exprefs Authority of Scripture: Christ is stiled the Promise made unto the *Fathers*--our *Fathers*||---spoken of by the Mouth of his holy *Prophets*, which have been since the *World began**--by the Mouth of *all* his *Prophets*, which shewed before of the coming of the *just One*†. The *Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the Grace that should come; searching what or what manner of Time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify when it testified beforehand the Sufferings of Christ, and the Glory that should follow*‡. Our first Observation then stands upon direct and positive Proof, a Foundation that is not to be shaken by the unbecoming Harangue and trifling *Sallies* of § *fanciful Conceits, imaginary Scheme, romantic System, Clouds, Mysteries, airy Castles, vain and impertinent Fancy*; especially as we shall proceed to shew, that it is supported by the Appeal of Christ and his Apostles.

St. *Luke*, for Evidence that Jesus was the Son of God, and the true *Messiah* promised to the World, carries his Geneology thro' all Ages, and places *Adam* at the Head of the List of those to whom it was promised, that he should descend from them: By-the-by, is not this next to positive Proof, that Christ was the Seed
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|| Acts xiii. 32. xxvi. 6.

* Luke xvii. 50. † Acts vii. 52. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 10.

§ Exam. Title-page, p. 5. 23, 24. 97, 98.

promised to *Adam*? *St. Paul*, in his Epistle to the *Romans*, refers to *Adam* as a Type of *Christ*, calling him *the Figure of him who is to come*||, to prove, that as Sin and Death entered *universally* into the World by one Man, *Adam*; so Righteousness and Life is restored *universally*, by one Man, *Jesus Christ*. Our Saviour testifies, that *Abel* was a Prophet and *righteous**; my Text specifies, that he was so by *Faith*. *St. Jude* appeals to *Enoch*, that he prophesied of *Christ's* coming to Judgment, saying, *Behold, the Lord cometh with Ten Thousands of his Saints to execute Judgment upon all*. *St. Peter*† testifies that *Christ*, by the Spirit, preached to the antediluvian World, who, says he, because they *obeyed not*, are now *Spirits in Prison*, the State of those who are under Condemnation. The same Apostle refers to the saving of *Noah* and his Family by Water, as a Type of our Baptism, which he calls the *Antitype*‡. *Jesus*, to induce the *Jews* to believe in him, proposed to them the Example of their boasted Progenitor: *Your Father Abraham*, says he, *rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it, and was glad*. The Passover was an Institution subsisting before the Law, and that it was prefigurative of *Christ's* Sufferings, is warranted by the express Authority of *St. Paul*, who says, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*§. *Jesus* in his Life-time was acknowledged to be the Paschal

|| Rom. v. 14. * Luke xi. 50. † 1 Pet. iii. 19.

‡ 1 Pet. iii. 21. § 1 Cor. v. 7.

Paschal Lamb: *Behold*, says the Baptist, *the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sin of the World* ||. By St. Peter he is called a Lamb without Blemish, and without Spot ††; and by St. John, the Lamb slain |||. Every Circumstance relating to the Passover is worthy our most serious and diligent Attention. The Lamb was to be perfect, and the killing of it was previously necessary to the *Israelites* being delivered from Captivity — was offered in the first Month of the Year, at Even --- not a Bone of it was to be broken, nor aught of it left until the Morning --- the Virtue of it's Blood turned away the Wrath of the destroying Angel, and the Want of it exposed the *Ægyptians* (the Enemies of God) to Destruction. Let any one but view the *Mosaic* Account of the Passover, with the Evangelical of the Character, and Sufferings of Christ, and let him doubt if he can, whether the one be a Prediction, and the other the corresponding Event. It was indeed the most instructive Image in the *Jewish* Church; a most comprehensive Prophecy in Things, which strike upon Men's Eyes with greater Power, than Words do upon the Ears. In this Feast there was not any Circumstance so minute, so seemingly indifferent, but what the Completion has shewn to be expressive. Once more :

St. Paul, in our Chapter, appeals to the History of the Elders for Evidence, that they had Faith,

Faith, and for Proof of it's Necessity to our Justification, *Without Faith*, says he, 'tis impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Now, 'tis certain, as we have observed already, that the only Foundation of Faith is the Revelation and Promise of God; for *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God* *. The preceding Instances are all exprefs Appeals of our Saviour and his Apostles to many Testimonies predictive of a *Messiah*, before the Delivery of the Law. The Assertion therefore that "Christ and his Apostles never looked for nor appealed to Prophecies higher than to the Law†," is worse than a Quibble: For if it's Intention was to insinuate, that Christ and his Apostles never refer to any Evidence that a Redeemer was promised, expected, and spoken of, before the Flood and the Law, 'tis manifestly false; and unless this was the Purpose of it, 'tis wholly trifling, and of no Service to his avowed Argument. We affirm then, from exprefs Testimony, and that appealed to by Christ and his Apostles, with the eminent Prelate on *the Use and Intent of Prophecy*: —
 " Christ was the End of the Law, and of all
 " the Promises made unto the Fathers: All
 " the Deliverances given by God to his Peo-
 " ple, were but Shadows, and as it were an
 " Ear-

* Rom. x. 17.

† Exam. p. 97.

“ Earnest of the great Deliverance he intended
 “ by his Son.”

We proceed now to prove the Solidity, Truth, and Propriety of the same eminent Prelate's Position — That the true Religion, instituted by God, has been one and the same from the Fall of *Adam*, subsisting ever upon the same Principles of Faith.

If God has given a Revelation of his Will and Purposes to Man, on which Principle this Position is built, then the true Religion must have been the same in all Ages, because instituted by him whose peculiar Character is — *I am JEHOVAH, I change not.* God's Method of saving Man must be one and the same ever. The Purposes of the Deity must be as unchangeable and uniform as his Nature. The Unity of true Religion therefore I am almost inclined to call a natural and self-evident Truth : However, if it is not the Dictate of natural Reason, it is of Scripture, which is much more to the Purpose.

The Rejection of *Cain* for Want of *Faith*; the bringing the Flood upon the World of the Ungodly, who were *disobedient to Christ's preaching*, in the Person of *Noah*; the Lord's having saved the People out of *Egypt*, and afterwards destroying them that *believed not**, who entered not into his Rest, because of *Unbelief*†; in short, the carrying the *Jews* into Captivity
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* Jude, ver. 5. † Heb. iv. 6.

for Apostacy, and their final Rejection for *not receiving Christ* when he came in Person, are eminent Instances what is the *false Religion*; and the Acceptance of *Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses*, the Prophets and *Jews* for their *Faith*, shews us what is the *true Religion*, and that it was one and the same from the Fall of *Adam*. 'Tis the constant Doctrine of the New Testament, that *Christ was slain---the Works were finished---the Kingdom was prepared from the Foundation of the World*. We speak the *Wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom, which God ordained before the World unto our Glory*.* 'Tis testified, that the Faith was *once* delivered to the Saints; that the Covenant confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law could not *disannul, add to, or make the Promise of none Effect*; that Christ came not to *destroy* the Law, which was their School-master to bring them unto him, and the Prophets, but to *fulfill*; that there is *one Body and one Spirit, one Hope of our Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, and one Mediator between God and Man*; in short, there is not one Doctrine inculcated with more Constancy in the Scriptures, and whose Truth stands forth more full to Observation, than--that the Plan of Salvation was laid prior to the Production of our System, revealed upon the Fall, once universally known, and that the true Religion has been, and shall to the End

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* 2 Tim. i. 9.

continue, one and the same, subsisting ever upon the same Principles of Faith. Is it not now surprizing, that so sound and evident a Proposition should be excepted against, much less be intituled, " Curious Refinement, vain " Amusement, fanatical Conceit, and enthusiastic Fancy !" * Had such a Censure dropt from the Pen of a professed Opponent of Revelation, we should have been at no Loss to determine it's View and Intent, namely, to insinuate, that the Two Testaments contain two different Revelations and Methods of Salvation, and thereby to set them at Variance. However, to obviate any such Inference, I must beg leave to conclude this Head with asserting, That the New Testament is no new Revelation, because it contains not *one new Doctrine*, nor *one new Precept*, consequently no new Method of Salvation ; for " both in " the Old and New Testament, everlasting Life " is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the " only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man." *And other Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ; † neither is there Salvation in any other : For there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved. ‡ He gave himself a Ransom for all, § to bring us unto God ; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our*

* Exam. p. 148, 149. † 1 Cor. iii. 11. ‡ Acts iv. 12.
§ 1 Tim. ii. 6.

our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to Light thro' the Gospel; || not first taught the Doctrine of the Resurrection and a future State, which had been all along taught; but by his own Resurrection from the Grave, he gave Demonstration of his Conquest over Death, and of his actual Restoration of that Life, which 'till then had been only promised to Mankind. What now remaineth, but that we neglect not so great Salvation, nor fall short of it through *Unbelief*, trusting to Nature and our own Righteousness. If God is to make us happy, it must be in his Way, not our own. Christ is the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*. In him then let us sincerely believe, after the Example of *Abel*, *Moses*, and the Prophets, that like them also we may be holy and righteous before God: For as *Unbelief*, like a corrupt Tree planted in a bad Soil, and removed from the benign Influences of the Sun, cannot but bring forth evil Fruit, or however can bring no Fruit to Perfection; so Faith, if it be made to spring from Conviction and Evidence, will be as regularly productive of good Works as a good Tree is of good Fruit. 'Twill as naturally be living and active as the Body, animated by the Spirit or Air, breathes and is in Motion.

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The rising of the Sun of Righteousness upon us, with healing in his Wings, will more powerfully change our Heart and Life, than the rising of the material Sun, at Spring, does the Face of Nature. *He that abideth in me, says Christ, the same bringeth forth much Fruit.** These are the Effects of a genuine and sound Faith. Ye therefore, Beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, praying in the holy Ghost; keep yourselves in the Love of God; gird up the Loins of your Mind; be sober; and hope to the End for the Grace that is to be brought unto you, *at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.*

* John xv. 5.

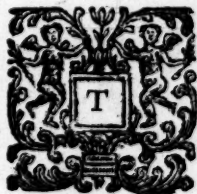


JOHN



J O H N xx. 31.

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing, ye might have Life through his Name.



THE *New Testament* is doubtless a faithful History of the Life of Jesus, his Birth, Life, Actions, Death, Resurrection and Ascension, their Consequences and Benefits, because written by Eye-witnesses and inspired Pen-men ; who declare unto us Things not of Yesterday, or of their own Imagination, but that which was from the *Beginning*, which they *heard*, which they had *seen with their Eyes*, which they *looked upon*, and their *Hands* had *handled* of the *Word of Life* *. There is also another Circumstance peculiar to the sacred Pen-men, that must incline every candid Person to credit and embrace what they deliver even to a degree of Prejudice, which is that they *all* were unvariably uniform in their
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* 1 John i. 1.

Testimony under the severest Persecutions, and at last sealed it with their Blood : Moreover, their Testimony is in some degree confirmed by that of prophane Writers, who attest the Existence of Jesus, and attribute to him the Power of working Miracles and Wonders. There is therefore not the least room to call in Question the Veracity of the sacred Writers, or the Ground of their own Conviction of the Reality of what they relate : We have all the Reason in the World to be assured they have *not followed cunningly devised Fables*, in making known unto us the *Power and Coming of the Lord Jesus*.

But how does the recording the Life of Jesus ascertain and prove him to be Christ, the Son of God ? Suppose others should make Pretensions to the same Title, by what Criterion are we to distinguish and determine the true from the false Claimant ? The Consideration of this Question is the immediate View of the present Discourse.

But first I would observe, that in settling all Debates, the usual Process is — to collect every Circumstance together by examination of the several Witnesses — consider their Agreement, and then determine the Cause as the whole Evidence shall direct. For dividing the Evidence, and resting the Trial upon any single Part can never bring a Cause to a fair Issue ; much less can resting it upon detached Pieces of a divided Part : This last would be a Proceeding

ceeding calculated rather to subvert than direct the Judgment. Thus in the Case before us, to put the Trial of Jesus's Claim to the Messiahship on the single Evidence of Miracles, or Prophecy, is surely to be guilty of Partiality, if not Injustice; but with respect to Prophecy in particular, to rest the Authority of the Gospel not on the whole of it, but on single and independent Predictions, must, in the Nature of Things, be charg'd with Injustice, if not with ill Designs.

In considering the present Subject therefore, I will endeavour,

1st, To shew Cause why we should not put this Truth — *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, on a single Part, but on the whole, of the Evidence.

2^{dly}, That Prophecy, which is one Evidence, is literal and typical.

3^{dly}, That the several Prophecies must be considered in Conjunction, and that their Concurrence in the Person of Jesus is what makes Prophecy an Evidence, and renders it at all convincing and conclusive that he is the Christ, the Son of God.

After which I will conclude with some Observations on the Result and happy Effects attending this our Belief---we shall *have Life through his Name*.

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Our first Proposition must appear most equitable and just, from even a transient View of the Method observed among Mankind in settling private, as well as public Debates; where all Arguments are admitted, all Witnesses heard, and all Claims are adjusted, and Titles settled, as the whole Evidence directs; our first Proposition therefore is agreeable to common and natural Equity. But if we recur to the Scriptures, they will teach us, that one Witness is not true. *i. e.* not convictive in any Case: *At the Mouth of two Witnesses, or at the Mouth of three Witnesses shall the Matter be established.** It was the constant Practice also of Jesus and his Apostles, to appeal to more than one Witness, in Proof of his being the Messiah. In the 8th Chapter of St. *John*, Jesus urges to the *Jews*, who had objected to his own Record, this Answer---*It is also written in your Law, that the Testimony of two Men is true; I am one that bear Witness of myself, and the Father that sent me, beareth Witness of me.* In the 5th Chapter he appeals to four Witnesses for Proof of his being the Messiah, namely, the Baptist---his own Works---the Voice of the Father and *Moses's* Writings. In the 10th Chapter he joins Prophecy and Miracles---*I am the good Shepherd---the Works that I do in my Father's Name, they bear Witness of me; and --- if I do not the Work of my Father, believe me not; but*

* Deut. xix. 15. xvii. 6. Mat. xviii. 16. 2 Cor. xiii. 1. Heb. x. 28.

but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe me for the very Work's Sake. In the 14th Chapter, he refers his Disciples to the Testimony of his *Miracles*, * the *Holy Spirit*, † and his own *Prophecy*. ‡ And, in the 15th Chapter, adds --- *If I had not done among them the Works which none other Man did, they had not had Sin --- when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear Witness, because ye have been with me from the Beginning.* We find also that many believed, when they saw the Miracles which Jesus did, and many even for his own Word §.

St. Peter in the 2d of *Acts*, appeals to Prophecy, to the Miracles and Wonders, which the *Jews* saw performed by Jesus in his Lifetime, in conjunction with their own Testimony — *we all are Witnesses* --- and about three thousand Souls were converted by this Evidence. The same Apostle, in that so much controverted Text, in his second Epistle, joins Prophecy with another Testimony.

Lastly, to the preceding Testimonies of the Father, Miracles, Prophecy, Jesus and the Apostles, we may add, that of the wonderful and speedy Propagation of the Gospel, which conquered without *Arms*, persuaded without *Rhetoric*, nay more, overcame *Enemies*, disarm-

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* Ver. 10.

† xvii. 20.

‡ 29.

§ John ii. 23. iii. 2. vi. 2. vii. 31. x. 41. 42.

ed *Tyrants*, and subdued *Empires* without *Force*: In short, prophane Authors, and even the very Devils, acknowledge and declare Jesus to be the *Holy one of God* *. Why now should we seperate the Evidence? But in particular, why do we divide Miracles and Prophecy? For is not this done by those who exalt Prophecy and depreciate Miracles? The Apostle indeed gives the Preference to Prophecy, but not as some do seemingly in Exclusion of other Proofs: He does it in Conjunction and Harmony with Miracles; but these set Miracles and Prophecy at variance by an unnecessary, unexampled, not to say unjust, Partiality. If we desire to establish and defend the Truth, we must be as careful to unite the Evidence, as its Opponents are industrious in dividing it; and common Justice requires this at our Hands.

Proceed we now to the Consideration of Prophecy---that it is literal and typical.

All Circumstances that are relative to the Messiah's Descent, the Time and Place of his Birth or otherwise, which cannot in their own *Nature*, by the *Context*, *Occasion* or *History*, carry any secondary Meaning or Application, must be placed in the Class of literal Prophecies; as must such as carry secondary Meanings and Applications in that of typical, which conveys Instruction by real Exhibitions, and material Patterns, subject indeed to a literal Meaning, but wherein

* Mark. i. 24. Luke iv. 34.

wherein the *Letter killeth* and *profiteth nothing*, as being natural Signs and Symbols appointed by God to raise spiritual Ideas of some more excellent future Things. Now if that Prophecy, which relates to a Messiah, stands thus in the Old Testament, and is applicable, and so apply'd by the Writers of the New, to the Person and State of Jesus; surely no Man, without doing Violence to his Reason, can entertain a deliberate Doubt, nay scarce a transcient Suspicion, whether he be the Messiah.

To prove this then by a few Instances.

The first Prophecy to be considered, is that eminent one of the Prophet *Micha*. *Thou Beth-lehem Ephratah, though little, art to be among the Thousands of Judah; out of thee shall He come forth unto me, who is to be Ruler in Israel: Whose Goings-forth have been from of old, from everlasting.** The Majesty and Character attributed to the Ruler here prophecied of, is very remarkable and peculiar,--- *whose Goings-forth have been from of old, from everlasting*; a Title too lofty and exalted for any temporal Monarch; neither are we led by History to apply it to any such Ruler born after this Prophecy in *Beth-lehem*. It is therefore a literal Prophecy of the *Messiah*, specifying the Place of his Nativity. Agreeable hereto is the Answer of the chief Priests and Scribes to *Herod*, who demanded of them where *Christ* should be born: And they said unto him, in *Beth-lehem of Judea.†* And

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* Mic. v. 1. † Mat. ii. 4, 5.

even the common People knew, that *Christ cometh of the Seed of David, and out of the Town of Beth-lehem, where David was.*†

Now this, like all divine Prophecies, was accomplished in a Way most wonderful and extraordinary, not wearing the least Appearance of finite Contrivance and human Foresight. *Joseph and Mary lived at Galilee, but were obliged by Cæsar's Edict to go up thence, out of the City of Nazareth into Judea, unto the City of David, which is called Beth-lehem, (because he was of the House and Lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused Wife, being great with Child. And so it was, that while they were there, the Days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped him in Swadling Clothes, and laid him in a Manger, because there was no room for them in the Inn.*

The 53d Chapter of *Isaiab* is a Description of the Sufferings of the Messiah, and the Benefits resulting from them to Mankind, as literal in the Prophecy, as the Relation of their Accomplishment stands in the History of the Life of Jesus. *David* also, in the 16th Psalm, speaketh of the Resurrection of the Messiah --- *thou wilt not leave my Soul † in Hell, (i. e. the Grave) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see Corruption.* This is a Prophecy, which cannot in its own Nature, by the Context or His-

† John vii. 42. † נפש my Animal Part.

History, carry any secondary Meaning or Application; because the Body of every Man that has died, and been buried since it's Delivery, hath remained in the Grave, and experienced Corruption: For *David*, after he had served his own Generation by the Will of God, fell on Sleep and was laid unto his Fathers and saw Corruption; but he whom God raised up saw no Corruption. Thus argues St. Paul, || and St. Peter still more fully--Men and Brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his Sepulchre is with us unto this Day: Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an Oath to him, that of the Fruit of his Loins, according to the Flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his Throne: He seeing this before, spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that his Soul was not left in Hell, neither his Flesh did see * Corruption. This Prophecy therefore of the Psalmist is literal of the Messiah, and verified only in Jesus, the spiritual David, the beloved Son, in whom God is well pleased. To this David only can those very express Prophecies of Ezekiel, † Jeremiah and Hoseah belong---I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my Servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God and my Servant David a Prince among

|| Act. xiii. 36. * Compare this Verse with the 10th of the xlix Psalm in the Original. † Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. xxxvii. 24. Jerem. xxx. 9. Hof. iii. 5.

among them, I the Lord have spoken it ; --- David my Servant shall be King over them — my Servant David shall be their Prince for ever --- they shall serve the Lord and David their King --- shall seek the Lord and David their King.

Lastly; the 24th and 47th Psalms are literal Prophecies of Christ's Ascension into Heaven, and Entrance upon his regal Office and Administration; accordingly they are appointed by the Compilers of our Liturgy among the proper Psalms for Ascension Day. I might produce many other Instances, but these may suffice to prove the Reality of literal Prophecies; as to that of typical all Men are agreed: Concerning which therefore I need only observe in general, that they seem to be of two kinds; 1st, Historical Events, and 2dly, the Ceremonies of the Law.

An eminent Instance of the first kind is the freeing of the *Israelites* from *Ægyptian* Slavery, and their Introduction into the Land of *Canaan*; made typical of our spiritual Deliverance from the Captivity of Sin and Death, and Introduction into Heaven by Jesus Christ. *

The Ceremonies of the Law, with an amazing Exactness, prefigured the Messiah's Sufferings, their Efficacy and Benefits. Some Festivals, by the great outward Solemnity with which they were observed, naturally tended to raise Sorrow and Compunction, to excite melting Ideas of the real Sacrifice, and cause the Votaries to look beyond them to the Original, which

* Heb. iv.

which they so justly represented. Let the Passover be an Instance.

Others again were calculated to raise Hope, to heighten Joy and Exultation; of this kind were the Feast of Tabernacles and the Jubilee.

The primary View, in the Epistles to the *Hebrews* and *Galatians*, seems to be to prove and point out, that the Law was a Shadow and directory to better Things to come; mere Flesh to be animated by the Spirit*; in itself weak and ineffectual for the Purposes of Life: *The Law made nothing perfect, but* (marg.) *was † an Introduction of a better Hope, namely, Christ the End of the Law for Righteousness, ‡ and by whom we draw nigh unto God.*

Upon the whole then we may with Truth affirm, that the Gospel was preached before in the *Old Testament*, and that it is a continued Prophecy by Words and Things of the Birth, Life, and Actions; Sufferings, Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension of the Messiah, whose Picture is drawn so much to the Life, that we need only view it with the History of the *New Testament*, to know if the Features of Jesus answer, and if he be the *Original*; which comes under our last Consideration, wherein we are to shew,

That the several Prophecies must be considered in Conjunction, and that their Con-
urrence

* Gal. iii. 3. † Heb. vii. 19. ‡ Rom. x. 4.

rence in the Person of Jesus is what makes Prophecy an Evidence, and renders it at all convincing and conclusive, that he is the Christ the Son of God.

The same Truth may have several Arguments for it's Support; but tho' any single Argument should be urged ten thousand Ways, or for ten thousand Years on the same Subject, still it is the same Argument; it's Repetition cannot make it so many different and distinct Arguments. The Gospel is a Truth; and Prophecy is one Argument among many for it's Support, repeated and continued thro' a Series of Ages of four thousand Years; now tho' there should be five hundred several Prophecies of the Person that was to come into the World, yet can they never be considered any otherwise than in Conjunction and as one Argument.

It can then with no Propriety be inferred that, because Jesus and his Apostles applied the several Prophecies to this or that Occasion, their Intention was to apply them *independently* on each other as so many *different and distinct Arguments*, as *so many Proofs* for the Truth of the Gospel,* nay the very contrary appears to be their Intention from their referring to the Scriptures in general: *Search the Scriptures, they testify of me*†; *Moses wrote of me*, says our Lord: and after his Resurrection, *beginning at Moses and the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning him-*

* Exam. p. 8, 16, 21, 94, 95, 150. † John v. 39, 46.

himself †. The *Bereans* are very highly commended for searching the Scriptures daily ‡. The Apostles carry the Geneology of Jesus, and trace the Faith in a promised Messiah up to *Adam*.

Again :

We cannot consider the Prophecies independently and detached from the Chain, because a single Link is not sufficient to determine the true Messiah from the false. Among so many Prophecies, 'tis very possible for one or two to be applicable to another Person; but this makes neither for the false, nor against the true, Claimant, whose Title must be grounded on the whole of Prophecy compleated in his Life: This is the Tenure by which Jesus claims and holds the Messiahship. Let two Instances suffice for Proof of this.

No one Thing or Person, under the Law, exhibited a perfect Picture and Character of the Messiah; but the several Circumstances were divided, as it were, among several Things and Persons, which represented and personated so many Particulars, which were to concur and unite in the great Personage that was to appear in the Fullness of Time. Thus there were three sorts of Sacrifices, the Burnt-offering or Holocaust; the Sacrifice for Sin, or the Sacrifice of Expiation of Pollutions; and the Pacific-Sacrifice or Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. These represented Grace and Purity,

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but

† Luke xxiv. 27. ‡ Acts xvii. 11.

but did not communicate it : They convinced the Sinner of the Necessity that was incumbent on him to purify himself, and make Satisfaction to God ; tho' they could not impart Innocence to him : But the true Sacrifice, (Christ Jesus) eminently includes all the Virtues and Qualities of the several Representatives ; being at the same Time an Holocaust, a Sacrifice for Sin, and a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. Again,

Under the Law no Individual was invested with the three great Offices of Prophet, Priest and King. *Saul* lost his Kingdom for invading the Office of Priest : Neither again could a Priest or Prophet interfere in the regal Prerogative : But they were made constantly to unite in the Person of Jesus, whose Life was spent in the Character of a *Prophet*, the great Prophet, to whom all were to hearken, * and be obedient : He offered himself up as *Priest* to make Attonement *once* for all. He is the real high Priest, of whom all others and the Benefit derived to the Man-slayer from their Death, † were but the temporary Figures and Representatives : And being *the first begotten from the Dead* ‡ — declared to be the Son of God with Power according to the Spirit of Holiness by the Resurrection from the Dead, § he became King and ascended his Throne in Pursuance of that august Prediction --- *lift up your Heads*

* Deut. xviii. 15. † Num. xxxv. 25. 28. ‡ Rev. i. 5.
§ Acts. v. 30. 31.

Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting Doors, and the King of Glory shall come in: Concerning whom that antient Edict was carried into Execution, tho' opposed by the Rage of the Heathen, and the Kings of the Earth--- * *Yet have I set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion: I will declare the Decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the utmost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession. Unto the Son is said--- Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom, † and he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet.* Hereby the Government of the Lord Jesus exceeds that of his royal Predecessors in Splendor, and Extent and Duration, as far as the Things, which are seen and are Temporal, are exceeded by the Things which are not seen and are eternal. The same is observable of the other Prophecies, all which concur and unite in the Person of Jesus literally and spiritually; whereby the Evidence, that he is the Messiah, is render'd amazingly conclusive; this Concurrence of the several Prophecies puts Christianity out of the Reach of all Evasion and Attacks of Unbelievers.

Thus clear and established is the Evidence of Christianity, able to stand the Inspection
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* Psalm ii. † Psalm xlv. 6. 7. Heb. i. 8. Psalm cx. 1.
1 Cor. xv. 25.

and Scrutiny of the most discerning Enquirer, whose Examination the nicer and more exact it is, the greater and more confirmed will be his Faith --- that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*; Christ, because really anointed of the Holy Ghost; and the Extraordinariness of his Birth from the Womb and the Grave, as we are inform'd by an Angel * and an Apostle, † intitled him to be the Son of God.

The Result and happy Effects of believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, remain next to be considered.

The Gift of God is eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the positive Doctrine and express Declaration of Revelation. Faith in Jesus Christ, and the Hope of everlasting Life by him, is inculcated almost in every Page of Scripture. *This is the Record, that God hath given us eternal Life; and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life; he that hath not the Son, hath not Life. ‡ Ye believe in God, says our Lord, believe also in me; in my Father's House are many Mansions, I go to prepare a Place for you, that where I am there ye may be also. § The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all Things into his Hand. He that believeth in the Son, hath everlasting Life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him. Every Spirit*

* Luke i. 35. † Act. xiii. 33. Rom. i. 1. ‡ 1 John v. 11, § John xiv. 1.

rit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God; || and every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of God. In short, Salvation by Jesus Christ, and the Necessity of Faith in him, is so evidently set forth in the Scriptures, so constantly urged and repeated, that it is unnecessary, in a Christian Assembly, to particularize Proofs and Instances. What seems to call for a particular Consideration is the Import and Meaning of *Name*, thro' which we are said to have Life. *Name* in many Places of Scripture seems to have a very high Use and Reference. 'Tis join'd with Lord, God, Jesus and Christ, and oftentimes it occurs alone with such Attributes and Actions as determine it to be *Personal*: Thus in the 20th Psalm---*the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee, send thee Help from the Sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Sion: Remember all thy Offerings, and accept thy Burnt-Sacrifice: Grant thee thy Heart's Desire, and fulfil all thy Mind.* Here is Defence, Help, Strength, Remembrance, Acceptance of Prayers, and granting the Heart's Desires; all personal Powers, attributed to *Name*. Also in the *New Testament* we read---*in the Name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk---by what Power or Name have ye done this.* In his Name shall the Gentiles trust.† Many believed in his Name,*
when

|| 1 John iv. 2. * Act. iii 6. iv .7. † Mat. xii. 21.

*when they saw the Miracles which he did. † --- holy Father keep thro' thine own Name. **

I cannot help taking Notice of one Passage more, wherein *Name* likewise conveys a most exalted Sense, and carries us expressly to Divinity itself. 'Tis the 22d Verse of the 23d Chapter of *Exodus*: — *Behold I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the Way, and to bring thee into the Place which I have prepared: Beware of him, and obey his Voice; provoke him not; for he will not pardon your Transgressions; for my Name is in him.* The Caution, Attention, and Regard, with which the *Israelites* are directed to follow their Leader — *provoke him not*, and the Reason assign'd, *for he will not pardon your Transgression*, and *my Name is in him*, bespeak him no created Being: Indeed, we have the Authority of *St. Stephen*, † that this Angel was the same divine Person that appeared to *Moses* in the Bush. *My Name is in him*; amazing Expression this! high and exalted beyond the utmost Stretch of finite Conception!

Whether now our Text consists of two Parts, differently relative, and *Name*, in the second Part, is designed to carry us beyond *Time* and *Creation*, I must leave every one, after a due Consideration of what has been observed, to determine for himself. §

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† John ii. 23. * John xvii. 11. † Act. vii. 38.

§ By considering *Name* as personal, and, as it seems to be, a Title of Distinction, we should be enabled to make not only Sense

Consider now the great Mystery of Godliness; the wonderful Evidence, Certainty, and gracious Purposes of that Religion proposed to Mankind in the Bible. Consider it under the Patriarchal, *Mosaic*, and Gospel Dispensations. In Externals, indeed, it differs, but not in Essentials: Here the three States meet and unite, which are one in Nature and Essence, tho' different in Form: Ceremonies made them not divide and be at Enmity, perfect Harmony subsisted

Sense of many Places of Scripture, but to conceive most exalted Ideas of the Greatness of the Personage, who was to come into the World, as the Saviour of Mankind. In the Prophet *Isaiah*, xxx. 27. we have a very extraordinary Instance. *Behold the Name of the Lord (שם יהוה) cometh from far, burning with his Anger and the Burden thereof is heavy: His Lips are full of Indignation, and his Tongue as a devouring Fire: and his Breath as an overflowing Stream shall reach to the midst of the Neck, to sift the Nations with the Sieve of Vanity.* Now if Name here be considered as a mere Appellation, how will the Sense of the Passage appear? Whereas by considering it as Personal, and referring particularly to that *divine* Person, who was promised to be the Redeemer of Mankind, all Obscurity and Harshness of Expression seem to vanish. The *Targum* of *Jonathan* is worth remarking — *Ecce Nomen Domini revelabitur sicut propheta verunt de eo Prophetæ ab antiquo, i. e.* Behold the Name of the Lord shall be revealed as the Prophets have prophesied of him from of old. 'Tis plain the Paraphrast understood that *Shm Jehova* referred to the Messiah, who only was prophesied of *ab antiquo, i. e.* from the Fall.

There are other high Titles, which distinguish *the Lord of Life*, that the Context in many Places determines to be Personal and not mere Appellations, such as *λός*, *δοξα*, &c. one Instance of the last I cannot forbear pointing out in the Epistle of *James* ii. 1. *My Brethren, have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of Persons.* The Strength and Force of this Passage is spoiled by an impertinent Insertion — *the Lord of*, after Christ. *Glory (δοξας)* stands in Apposition to Christ, and reads thus, — Have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Glory*, with respect of Persons.

subsisted between them, and each united in proposing the same Object of Belief, Hope, and Love. In short, God repeated the same Divine Truths; diversified and illustrated them in a Variety of Styles, and by the Medium of material Images, Histories, and Events; renewed those very Promises at sundry Times, and in diverse Manners, unto the Fathers by the Prophets, which he hath in these last Days spoken and fulfilled unto us by his Son: And God, by thus explaining his Will and adapting his Instructions, hath consulted the Capacities, Leisure, and Improvement of all Mankind: Some Parts of Scripture are familiar, and lie palpably evident to the Poor, even to *Babes* in Knowledge; others again are so sublime and elevated, that they are reserved for the Investigation and Delight of the Studious and Diligent, even for those, *who are of full Age* and are become *skilful in the Word of Righteousness*. Thus the Plan of divine Mercy, which began with the first Man and was continued on, is now carried into Execution, and recorded in Writing to be standing Evidence, complete and finished, capable of leading --- the Vulgar, the Unthinking, the Illiterate, as well as of determining ---- the Ingenious, the Inquisitive, the Learned, without the Continuance of Miracles and inspired Teachers.

How carelessly unattentive now are they, who neglect to examine the Scriptures; but
how

how wilfully perverse and criminal must others be, who fancy they want not their Assistance; and disbelieve them, because in them are most Things easy, and some Things hard, to be understood ! Many, too many, there are, who do the first ; and even some who do the last, ungratefully rejecting Christianity, tho' it exhorts them to avoid only what is hurtful, and to pursue what is attended with immediate Benefits and everlasting Blessings, which *Eye hath not seen, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive.* But, Beloved, I am persuaded better Things of you and Things that accompany Salvation, by being of the Number not of those who neglect or reject, but of those who search the Scriptures, that in them ye may not only *think*, but be assured, *ye have eternal Life* ; that ye may be *able to give an Answer to every one that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you*, and not, by the Words of Man's Wisdom, be *moved away from the Hope of the Gospel*, but *continue in the Faith grounded and settled.* The Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged Sword ; possesses yourselves of this Weapon, with which one may chase a thousand, and ten put ten thousand to Flight. And remember whom ye serve, that he, under whose Banner ye are listed, is *mighty to save*---will come quickly, *and his Reward is with him, to give every Man according as his Work shall be.* Hold fast, therefore, *the Profession of your Faith without*

wavering, for faithful is he that promiseth. Finally, my Brethren, Be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord: For when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory.

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